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THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW,

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No. LXXXIV.

ART. I.—*Substance of two Speeches delivered in the House of Commons on the 21st and 25th March, 1825, by the Right Honourable* WILLIAM HUSKISSON, *respecting the Colonial Policy and Foreign Commerce of the Country.* pp. 88. London, 1825.

To understand the nature and probable effect of the changes that have been lately effected in our colonial system, and to judge whether those changes are calculated to promote the real interests and prosperity of the British Empire, are obviously objects of the greatest interest and importance. But to arrive at correct conclusions on these points, we must take a much more enlarged view of the subject than has been taken in the Speeches before us; and enter at some length upon an examination of the great principles involved in the colonial system. We shall endeavour to be as brief as possible. But the difficulty of the subject, and the magnitude of the interests involved in the experiment on which we have entered, must excuse us if we should dwell on some points at greater length than impatient or superficial readers may think necessary.

Various motives have, in different countries and ages, led to the formation of colonies.* The Greek colonies of an-

* Seneca has given, in a few words, a very clear and accurate statement of the different motives that induced the ancients to found colonies—'*Nec omnibus eadem causa relinquendi quærendique patriam* '*fuit. Alios excidia urbium suarum, hostilibus armis elapsos, in alie-* '*na, spoliatos suis, expulerunt: Alios domestica seditio submovit:*

tiquity seem to have been chiefly founded by citizens whom the violence and fury of contending factions had forced to leave their native land; but they were sometimes formed for the purpose of relieving the mother country of a redundant population, and sometimes also for the purpose of extending the sphere of commercial transactions, or of conducting them with greater security and advantage. The relations between the mother country and the colony depended, in a great measure, on the motives which led to the establishment of the latter. When a colony was founded by fugitives, forcibly expelled from their ancient homes; or when it was founded, as was frequently the case, by bodies of voluntary emigrants, who received no assistance from, and were in no respect controlled by the parent state, the colony was from the first independent: And even in those rarer cases in which the emigration was conducted under the superintendence of the parent city, and when the colony was protected by her power and influence, the dependence was, in most cases, far from being absolute and complete. The great bulk of the Greek colonies, therefore, were really independent states; and though they commonly regarded the land of their forefathers with filial respect, though they yielded to its citizens the place of distinction at public games and religious solemnities, and were expected to assist them in time of war, they did so as allies only, on fair and equal terms, and never as subjects. Owing to the freedom of their institutions, and their superiority in the arts of civilized life to the native inhabitants of the countries among whom they were generally placed, these colonies rose, in a comparatively short period, to a high pitch of opulence and refinement; and many among them, as Miletus and Ephesus in Asia Minor, Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, and Tarentum and Locri in Italy, not only equalled, but greatly surpassed their mother cities in wealth and power. The colonists were all imbued with the active enterprising character of their ancestors; and as they, and their mother cities, were all intimately connected by the strong and powerful ties of kindred, of language, customs, and religion, a close and very extensive intercourse uniformly subsisted amongst them. The industry and inventive powers of

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' *Alios nimia superfluentis populi frequentia, ad exonerandas vires, emisit: Alios pestilentia, aut frequens terrarum hiatus, aut aliqua intoleranda infelicis soli ejecerunt: Quosdam fertilis oræ, et in majus laudatæ, fama corrupit: Alios alia causa excivit domibus suis.*'—Consol. ad Helviam, cap. 6.

the inhabitants of each particular city and colony were thus whetted and improved by the competition of all the rest; and a stimulus was given to the spirit of emulation and discovery, that contributed, in a degree not easy to be conceived, to accelerate the civilization and improvement of the ancient world.

The Roman colonies were partly, but in a very inferior degree, formed for the same objects as those of the Greeks. But they were, generally speaking, founded by and under the authority of the Roman government, and were intended to serve, at once, as outlets for poor and discontented citizens, and as military stations, or garrisons, to secure the subjection of the conquered provinces over which they were scattered. The most intimate political union was always maintained between these colonies and the mother city. Their internal government was modelled on that of Rome; and, while their superior officers were almost all appointed by and sent from the capital, the colonists were made to contribute their full quota of troops and taxes, to assist in carrying on the interminable contests in which the Republic was almost constantly engaged.*

The early colonies of most modern nations were founded by private adventurers, influenced either by the hope of gain, or by a desire to escape from religious persecution, without any wish to relieve the mother country of a surplus population, or to bridle subjugated provinces. On their first institution, therefore, the modern colonies approached, though with some essential variations, more nearly to the Grecian than the Roman model—But the period of their freedom was of very limited duration. They were very soon subjected to laws and regulations framed in the metropolis, and calculated, as was to be suppos-

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* The subject of the ancient colonies has been treated by many writers; among others by Bougainville, in his *Dissertation*, which gained the prize given by the French Academy in 1745. Professor Barron of St Andrew's, in an anonymous treatise on the *History of the Colonization of the Free States of Antiquity*, published in 1777, laboured to prove, that the ancients exercised the same species of control over their colonists that has been commonly exercised by the moderns. Barron's tract was answered by Dr Symonds of Cambridge, who published *Remarks* on it in 1778, and by Sir William Meredith, in his *Historical Remarks on the Taxation of Free States*, published in 1781. Barron's tract seems also to have given rise to the excellent work of St Croix *De l'Etat et du Sort des Anciennes Colonies*, published in 1778.

ed, rather to promote its interests than those of the colony. At a somewhat later period, the foundation of colonial establishments was eagerly patronized by most European governments, in the view of extending commerce, and of enriching the mother country, by securing to her the exclusive possession of the market of distant countries; and where, from the thinness of the aboriginal population, or their inferiority in the arts of civilized life, the colonists were enabled to amass fortunes with comparative rapidity.

The Spaniards who first resorted to America after its discovery, had no intention of settling in the country, or of colonizing it. The idea that gold and silver alone constituted wealth, was then universally prevalent; and the bold and enterprising companions and followers of Columbus, instead of engaging in industrious undertakings, which they neither understood nor relished, sought only to enrich themselves by plundering the feeble and defenceless natives of that gold and silver which they had accumulated, and of the abundance of which the most exaggerated accounts were immediately spread throughout Europe. It was the thirst for gold—the *auri sacra fames*, in its most literal and degrading form—that added the empires of Mexico and Peru to the Spanish Crown,—that inspired Cortez and Pizarro with zeal to undertake, and courage to execute, their daring and hazardous enterprises. When the Spanish adventurers arrived on an unknown coast, their single inquiry was, whether it abounded in gold. If it did, they remained, for some time at least, in the country; if not, they immediately set sail for some other quarter. The slow progress of the Spanish colonies, after their first discovery, must principally be ascribed to this cause. The gold and silver accumulated by the natives was very soon exhausted; and the skill and energy of the successive swarms of adventurers, who continued to pour into the country, were principally directed to the unproductive and generally ruinous trade of mining. The few large fortunes that were made in this way, like the large prizes in a lottery, inflamed the cupidity of the multitude, and gave an appearance of credibility to the fabulous accounts of the excessive productiveness of the mines. After the gambling spirit which had exclusively actuated the early adventurers, had begun to subside, the colonists gradually betook themselves to agricultural and commercial pursuits. And the vast variety of valuable productions with which Mexico and the other Spanish colonies abound, the extreme richness of their soil, and their advantageous situation, would, had they been only to-

lerably well governed, have occasioned their rapid increase in wealth and civilization. But a blind and intolerant despotism paralyzed all their energies, and fettered and retarded their progress. All the abuses and defects of the government of old Spain were transferred to, and multiplied in, the colonies. The whole property of those vast regions was considered as vested in the crown of Spain; and every law or regulation, whether of a local or general nature, affecting their government, emanated from the council of the Indies, in which, it was supposed, the king was always present. We cannot stop to describe the sort of regulations to which the colonists were subjected with any degree of minuteness; but we may notice a few of them to furnish the means of judging of their general spirit and probable effect. It was, for example, made a *capital* offence to carry on any intercourse with foreigners; and the inhabitants of the different colonies were even forbidden any intercourse with each other, unless under the strictest and most vexatious regulations: There were several articles, such as flax, hemp, and wine, which they were not permitted to cultivate; at the same time that the crown reserved to itself the monopoly of salt, tobacco, gunpowder, and some other less important articles: The alcavala, and other oppressive imposts, which had proved destructive of industry in Old Spain, were rigorously levied as well on the exports as on the imports of the colonies: No situation of power or emolument could be filled except by a native of Old Spain: The Catholic religion was established to the exclusion of every other; and bishops, tithes, and the inquisition, followed in its train; while, in order still better to consolidate and strengthen the foundations of this monstrous despotism, the government endeavoured to make the colonists insensible of their degradation by proscribing every species of instruction, and watchfully opposing the introduction and progress of all useful knowledge!

Under such circumstances, we cannot be surprised that the continental colonists, among whom the monopoly system was maintained in its greatest purity, should have languished for above two centuries in a state of sluggish inactivity. Though surrounded by all the means of producing wealth, they were not generally wealthy. Oppression rendered them indolent; and went far to deprive them not only of the power, but also of the wish, to emerge from poverty. The progress of the colonists, who occupied the West India Islands, was not quite so slow. It is certain, however, that up to the middle of last century, Spain reaped no greater advantage from the possession of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Porto Rico, than England

or France from the smallest of their dependencies. In proof of this we may mention, that the noble island of Cuba, which could without difficulty supply all Europe with sugar, did not, in 1750, produce a sufficient quantity even for the consumption of Old Spain. But the combined influence of an arbitrary and intolerant government, and of a degrading superstition, could not balance the means of improvement, which the fertility of the soil, and the command thence arising over most of the necessaries and many of the conveniences of life, gave to the colonists. Owing also to the total incapacity of Old Spain to furnish her transatlantic provinces with a sufficient supply of the articles she had forced them to import from Europe, and the consequent extension of the contraband trade directly and indirectly carried on with them by the other European nations, she had been compelled gradually to relax the severity of her commercial monopoly. A new impulse was thus given to the spirit of industry. The colonists began to be more sensible of the natural advantages of their situation, and less inclined to submit to the blind and bigotted policy of the Spanish court. In 1781 a rebellion broke out in Peru, in consequence of an attempt made by the government to establish a new monopoly in that province, which threatened to end in the total dissolution of the connexion between Spain and South America, and was not quelled without great difficulty and much bloodshed. But the spirit of liberty when once excited, could not be again suppressed. It continued to gain ground progressively, until the commencement of the late contest between France and Spain interrupted the communication with the mother country, and gave the colonists an opportunity of proclaiming that independence which, after a lengthened and bloody struggle, they have happily succeeded in achieving.

The English, who, like all the other nations of Europe, had been impressed with mingled feelings of admiration and envy by the extent and importance of the acquisitions made by the Spaniards in the New World, speedily entered with enthusiasm and ardour into the career of discovery. Owing, however, to the bull which Ferdinand and Isabella had obtained from the Pope, conveying to them the ample donation of all the countries inhabited by infidels that the Spaniards had discovered, or might discover, the English, to avoid encroaching on the dominions of their rivals, were obliged to direct their efforts further to the north. Several attempts to found colonies on the coast of America were made in the reign of Elizabeth by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Richard Grenville, Sir Walter Raleigh

and others. But in consequence of their ignorance of the country, the deficiency of their supplies of provisions, the loss of time in fruitless searches after gold, and the various difficulties incident to the first settlement of a colony, none of these attempts proved successful: And it was not until 1607, that a small body of adventurers founded the first permanent establishment of the English in America, at James Town in Virginia. Letters-patent were granted in 1609 by King James to the principal persons resident in London, by whom the expense attending the formation of the colony was to be defrayed, incorporating them into a Company, and establishing a Council in England for the direction of their proceedings, the members of which were to be chosen by, and removable at, the pleasure of the majority of the partners of the Company; permitting whatever was necessary for the support and sustenance of the colony for the first seven years, to be exported free of duty; declaring that the colonists and their descendants were to be secured in all the rights and privileges of Englishmen, the same as if they had remained at home, or been born in England; and reserving only as the stipulated price of these concessions, and in imitation of the policy of the Spaniards, *one-fifth* part of the gold and silver ore to be found in the colonies, which was to be paid to his Majesty and his successors in all time to come. In virtue of these powers, the Company issued, in 1621, a charter or ordinance, which gave a legal and permanent form to the constitution of the colony. By this charter the supreme legislative authority was lodged, partly in the Governor, who held the place of the sovereign, partly in a council of state named by the Company, and partly in a general council, or assembly composed of the representatives of the people, in which were vested powers and privileges similar to those of the House of Commons. It was not long, however, before the King and the Company quarrelled. The latter were in consequence divested of all their rights, partly by open violence, and partly under colour of law, without compensation, after having expended upwards of 150,000*l.* in founding the colony; and a governor and council of state appointed by the King succeeded to the powers of those appointed by the Company.*

The founders of the colony in Virginia had been actuated solely by the hopes of gain: But the colonies that were soon

* Robertson's History of America, Book 9th, passim; Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, p. 179.

after established in New England, were chiefly planted by men who fled from religious and political persecution. The form of government in the New England colonies, though at first modified a good deal by the peculiar religious opinions entertained by the colonists, was in its leading principles essentially free. For a considerable period the colonists elected their own governors, coined money, and exercised most of the rights of sovereignty; while the English, wholly engrossed with the contest between freedom and prerogative at home, had no leisure to attend to their proceedings. Subsequently to the Restoration, however, the governments of most of the New England States were established nearly on the same footing as that of Virginia; which indeed became the favourite model, not only for the constitution of the colonies established on the Continent, with the exception of the proprietary governments of Pennsylvania and Maryland, but also for those that were established in the West India islands. But under every vicissitude of government and fortune, the New England colonists were distinguished by the same ardent and enthusiastic love of liberty that had first induced them to quit their native land. Every thing relating to the internal regulation and administration of the different colonies, was determined in the colonial assemblies by representatives freely chosen by the settlers. The personal liberty of the citizens was well secured and vigilantly protected. And if we except the restraints on their commerce, the monoply of which was jealously guarded by the mother country, the inhabitants of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New England, enjoyed nearly the same degree of freedom, when colonists of England, that they now enjoy as citizens of the powerful republic of North America. Their progress in wealth and population was in consequence quite unprecedented in the history of the world. 'For my own part,' said Mr Burke, in his speech on American Taxation in 1774, 'I never cast an eye on their flourishing commerce, and their 'cultivated and commodious life, but they seem to me rather 'ancient nations, grown to perfection through a long series of 'fortunate events, and a train of successful industry, accumulating wealth in many centuries, than colonies of yesterday, 'than a set of miserable outcasts a few years ago, not so much 'sent as thrown out, on the bleak and barren shore of a desolate wilderness, three thousand miles from all civilized intercourse.' And the fact, that the white population of the United States had increased in 1776, at the commencement of the revolutionary war, to above two millions, and that the value

of the exports from Great Britain to them amounted to about 1,300,000*l.* a year, shows that Mr Burke's observations are as correct as they are eloquent.

It is not difficult to discover the causes of the unexampled prosperity and rapid growth of our North American colonies, and generally of all colonies placed under similar circumstances. The North American colonists carried with them a knowledge of the arts and sciences practised by a civilized and polished people. They had been trained from their infancy to habits of industry and subordination. They were practically acquainted with the best and wisest form of civil polity that had been established in Europe; and they were placed in a situation that enabled them, without difficulty, to remedy its defects, and to try every institution by the test of utility. But the thinness of the aboriginal population, and the consequent facility of obtaining inexhaustible supplies of fertile and unoccupied land, must certainly be placed at the head of all the causes which have promoted the rapid increase of wealth and population in the United States, and in all the other colonies, both of North and South America. On the first founding of a colony, and for long after, each colonist gets an ample supply of land of the *best quality;* and having no rent, and scarcely any taxes to pay, his industry necessarily becomes exceedingly productive, and he has every means, and every motive to amass capital. In consequence, he is eager to collect labourers from all quarters, and is both willing and able to reward them with high wages. But these high wages afford the means of accumulation, and, joined to the plenty and cheapness of the land, speedily change the more industrious labourers into proprietors, and enable them, in their turn, to become the employers of fresh labourers; so that every class participates in the general improvement, and Capital and Population advance with a rapidity hardly conceivable in old settled and fully peopled countries.

It has been frequently said, that the establishment of our American and West India colonies was a device of the supporters of the exclusive or mercantile system—that they founded them in the view of raising up a vast agricultural population, whose commerce should be confined entirely to an exchange of their raw products for our manufactured goods. There is, however, no truth in these assertions. On the contrary, the charters granted to the founders of the settlement in Virginia, distinctly *empower the colonists to carry on a direct intercourse with foreign states.* Nor were they

slow to avail themselves of this permission; for they had, so early as 1620, established tobacco warehouses in Middleburgh and Flushing; * and the subsequent proceedings of the British Government, depriving them of this freedom of commerce, were the chief cause of those disputes, which broke out, in 1676, in an open rebellion, of ominous and threatening import! † It was not, therefore, to the selfish and shallow policy of monopolists, but to the persecuting spirit of the House of Stuart, and to the violence and disorder of the civil wars, that America is chiefly indebted for the introduction of British arts and British freedom. The stipulated tribute of a *fifth* part of whatever gold and silver might be found in the country, was deemed at the time a sufficient compensation for the privileges bestowed on the founders of the colony in Virginia; and the Government were too glad to get rid of the bold and fanatical leaders of the New England colonists, and too much engaged with other matters, to think of subjecting them to any restraints that might have lessened their desire to emigrate. It was not until the colonists had surmounted the difficulties and hardships incident to their first establishment, and had begun to increase rapidly in wealth, that their commerce became an object of importance, and that regulations were framed in the view of restricting its freedom, and of rendering it peculiarly advantageous to the mother country. The Act of 1650, passed by the Republican Parliament, laid the first foundations of the monopoly system, by confining the import and export trade of the colonies exclusively to British or colony built ships. But the famous Navigation Act of 1660 (12 Charles II. cap. 18.) went much farther. It enacted, that certain specified articles, the produce of the colonies, and since well known in commerce by the name of *enumerated* articles, should not be exported directly from the colonies to any foreign country: but that they should first be sent to Britain, and there unladen, (the words of the act are, *laid upon the shore*), before they could be forwarded to their final destination. Sugar, molasses, ginger, fustic, tobacco, cotton and indigo, were originally enumerated; and the list was subsequently enlarged by the addition of coffee, hides and skins, iron, corn, lumber, &c. In 1739, the monopoly system was so far relaxed, that sugars were permitted to be carried directly from the British plantations to any port or place southward of Cape Finisterre; it is certain, however, that the conditions and regulations under which this in-

* Robertson's America, Book 9th, p. 104.
† Ibid. p. 147.

dulgence was granted, continued so strict and numerous up to 1803, when they were a good deal simplified, as to render it in a great degree nugatory; * and with this exception, the oppressive and vexatious restrictions on their direct exportation to foreign countries, were maintained on most of the other *enumerated* commodities of any importance, up to the recent alterations.

But the insatiable rapacity of monopoly was not to be satisfied with compelling the colonists to *sell* their produce exclusively in the English markets. It was next thought advisable, that they should be obliged to *buy* such foreign articles as they might stand in need of, exclusively from the merchants and manufacturers of England.—For this purpose it was enacted in 1663, that 'no commodity of the growth, production, or manufacture 'of Europe, shall be imported into the British plantations, but 'such as are laden and put on board in England, Wales, or 'Berwick-upon-Tweed, and in English built shipping, whereof 'the master and three-fourths of the crew are English.' The preamble to this statute, which effectually excluded the colonists from every market for European produce, except that of England, assigns the motive for this restriction to be, 'the 'maintaining a greater correspondence and kindness between 'the subjects at home and those in the plantations; keeping 'the colonies in a firmer dependence on the mother country; 'making them yet more beneficial to it, in the farther employ'ment and increase of English shipping, and the vent of Eng'lish manufactures and commodities; rendering the naviga'tion to and from them more safe and cheap; and making this 'kingdom a staple, not only of the commodities of the planta'tions, but also of the commodities of other countries and places 'for their supply; it being the usage of other nations to keep 'their plantation trade exclusively to themselves.'

It was also a leading principle in the system of colonial policy, adopted as well by England as by the other European nations, to discourage all attempts to manufacture such articles in the colonies as could be provided for them by the mother country. The history of our colonial system, is full of attempts of this sort; and so essential was this principle deemed to the idea of a colony, that even Lord Chatham did not hesitate to declare in his place in Parliament, that 'the British colonists 'of North America had *no* RIGHT *to manufacture even a nail* '*for a horse-shoe!*' † And when such were the enactments made

* Edwards' West Indies, Vol. II. p. 452, Ed. 1819.
† Ibid. Vol. II. p. 566.

by the Legislature, and such the avowed sentiments of a great Parliamentary leader and a friend to the colonies, we need not be surprised at a declaration of the late Lord Sheffield, who did no more indeed than express the decided opinion of almost all the merchants and politicians of his time, when he affirmed that 'THE ONLY *use of American colonies or West India islands* 'is THE MONOPOLY *of their consumption, and the carriage of their* '*produce !*'

The attempt made in the early part of the late reign to levy taxes on the American colonies, was the immediate cause of the contest which ended, happily for them, and not less happily for ourselves, in their independence. But the proceedings regarding taxation only hastened a crisis which could not have been long averted. The colonists were every day becoming more and more discontented with the restraints imposed on their commerce; and it is quite idle to suppose, that a great and growing people would have continued to submit to such galling and vexatious restrictions. Emancipation from the yoke of the mother country, was a necessary step in the progress of the American colonies. And instead of repining at their prosperity, it should be our proudest boast. England was the *magna virum mater*—she formed and bred the men who established this mighty empire in the wilderness. It was by her example and her precepts that the colonists rose to eminence, not by their wealth and industry only, but by their devoted attachment to the cause of rational and substantial freedom. Nor can there be a doubt, that it is in every point of view infinitely more for the glory and advantage of England, to be the friend and ally of a mighty progeny of freemen, than to be wielding a barren and blood-stained sceptre over millions of discontented and rebellious colonists.

Having thus endeavoured to furnish our readers with a short and necessarily very imperfect sketch of the rise and progress of the colonial system, we shall next proceed to examine the various advantages which this system has been supposed to confer on the mother country.

I. 1. In entering upon this examination, it may be proper, in the *first* place, to observe, that no inference can fairly be drawn in favour of the monopoly of the colony trade exercised by the mother country, from the mere circumstance of that monopoly being advantageous to her, unless it can, at the same time, be shown that it occasions no injury to the colony. It must be remembered, that a colony is not a part of a foreign state: It is an integral and constituent part of your own empire; and it is contrary to every principle of justice and of sound policy to at-

tempt to enrich one province or district at the expense of the rest. The protection which every government is bound to grant to all classes of its subjects, ought not to vary with the varying degrees of latitude and longitude in which they live. Had Jamaica been the mother country and England the colony, we should certainly have thought, and most justly, that our distance from Jamaica was no reason at all why we should not enjoy an equality of privileges, or why we should submit to have our energies cramped and our commerce restricted, for the sake of affording employment to a few Jamaica ships and manufacturers. This is the proper point of view from which we should survey the restrictions on the colony trade. We should remember, that in whatever degree the monopoly is beneficial to ourselves by enabling us to sell dearer to the colonists, and to buy cheaper from them than we should otherwise be able to do, it must to the same extent be injurious to them; and must, therefore, be entirely subversive of that equality of privileges and protection which every just and wise government must grant indiscriminately to all who are under its dominion.

2. But then we come, in the *second* place, to the question, whether the monopoly of the colony trade be *really advantageous to the mother country*: And here we have another opportunity of remarking the intimate connexion that always subsists between the sound principles of impartial justice and of public wealth. That equality of rights and privileges to which every subject of a free country has a just claim, can never be encroached upon without checking the progress of national opulence. The *monopoly* of the colony trade, instead of enriching, has really tended to impoverish the nations who have established colonies. It is true, that the power reserved by the mother country of exclusively supplying her colonists with particular sorts of goods, may, when properly enforced, compel them to buy those commodities from her, which they might otherwise have obtained at a cheaper rate from a stranger. But of what advantage is this forced sale? Every people have some natural or acquired capacity for the prosecution of certain branches of industry in preference to others; and no proposition can be more true, or better established, than that the wealth of every people will be most effectually promoted by their confining their industry to those branches in which they have a superiority, and exchanging their surplus produce in these, for commodities that can be more easily produced by others. But the colonial monopoly is diametrically opposed to this grand principle. If the monopoly, by excluding competition, occasions an artificial demand for our commodities, it is obvious it must also occasion an *artificial di-*

stribution of the capital and labour of the country: It must divert a portion of them from some of the naturally beneficial channels into which they would otherwise have flowed, to force them into those where there is no real room for them, and where they will be useless the moment the monopoly ceases. It is quite visionary to suppose that any country can ever be enriched by such means; and yet, such is the only advantage of which the monopoly of the colonial supply can ever be productive. We say the *only* advantage; for, it is certain that if the mother country could furnish the colony with the commodities she wants, as cheap as they could be furnished by any one else, the identity of language, and the various ties of relationship subsisting between them, would always secure her the exclusive command of the colony market, independently altogether of any artificial regulations. In point of fact, therefore, the monopoly is either useless or pernicious: It is useless when the mother country can furnish the colony with commodities at the same or a lower rate than others: and when she cannot do this, the monopoly, by forcing a portion of her capital and industry into employments for which she has no peculiar aptitude, but the contrary, is plainly and certainly pernicious.

The consequences of the American war have completely verified the truth of these remarks. No colonies were ever reckoned so important and valuable as those which now form the Republic of the United States. With the exception of Dean Tucker, Dr Smith, and one or two more, the politicians of this country and the Continent firmly believed that the independence of the colonies would be decisive of the fate of England —that the Sun of Britain's glory would then set, and forever! When the question of independence was first mooted in the House of Commons, it was indignantly demanded—would you ask a mighty giant voluntarily to shrink into a feeble and puny dwarf? But it was found impossible to maintain this high tone. Independence could not be refused: and what has been the result? Has Great Britain fallen from the high place she formerly occupied among the nations of the earth? Has the emancipation of the colonies been in the slightest degree prejudicial to our wealth, commerce, or industry? The reverse, as every one knows, is decidedly the fact. We have continued since the peace of 1784, to enjoy every previous advantage resulting from our intercourse with the colonies; and we have done this without being subjected, as was previously the case, to the heavy expense of maintaining armaments for the defence of such distant and extensive territories. The value of the commodities now annually exported from Great Britain to the United States, is *upwards of seven times* the value of the commodities

exported to the colonies previous to the war, and when we had the exclusive monopoly of their supply. Nor while we can afford to supply the Americans cheaper than they can manufacture at home, and cheaper than they can be supplied by others, is there the least risk of our losing their market. Our trade with the United States, now that they are independent, rests on quite as firm a basis as it did when they were subject to our regulations. So large a proportion of the capital and industry of each particular country is most profitably employed in producing commodities for the market of the other, that there is no reason to fear the trade will be rashly or capriciously interfered with. It is not an artificial, but a natural trade: It does not rest on the miserable foundation of bounties and prohibitions, but on the gratification of real wants and desires. And as it is equally advantageous to both countries, we may confidently predict that it will become still more productive of wealth, comforts, and enjoyments.

3. It has been repeatedly urged, that a colonial trade carried on under the protection of a monopoly, is entirely exempted from those contingencies and revulsions to which the trade between independent nations is necessarily more or less liable; and that the exclusion of competition always secures the command of the colony market. But we have already shown that the forced exclusion of competition is really of no advantage, but the reverse. Admitting, however, that it is an advantage, it is one that can never be reaped except from small and easily guarded colonies. It is plainly impossible, supposing that the United States had continued to this hour a dependency of England, that the most rigid and severe enforcement of the exclusive system could have preserved us the monopoly of their market, had any competitors appeared in the field capable of underselling us. The whole navy of Great Britain, though it were doubled, would not be sufficient to guard the coast from the Mississippi to the St Lawrence, from the intrusion of smugglers; and the same thing is true of the West India islands. Cheap goods are sure to make their way through every barrier—*Per medios ire satellites amant.** All the tyrannical regulations and guarda costas of Old Spain, did not prevent her colonies from being deluged with the prohibited commodities of England, France, and Germany. It is indeed quite childish to suppose

* Lord Sheffield states distinctly, that when the American colonists found they could import goods at a cheaper rate from other countries than from England, they had very little difficulty in evading our restrictions.—*Observations on the Commerce of America*, p. 248.

that any extensive market can ever be preserved by mere dint of customhouse regulations. They are always productive of injury, and never of advantage. And we may rest assured, that our command of the American market depends at this moment on the very same principle—*the comparative cheapness of our manufactured goods*, on which it depended when we had a governor in every state: And so long as we preserve this single advantage, the preference we have hitherto enjoyed will continue, independently altogether of commercial treaties, Acts of Parliament, or Acts of Congress.

4. It has been further urged in defence of the colonial system, that it ensures the regular and certain supply of the mother country with commodities which are the exclusive productions of the colonies; and that, in the event of these becoming free, we might be obliged to pay a monopoly price for articles which custom has now rendered indispensable. This apprehension appears extremely futile and unfounded. We often hear of the holders of colonial produce being subjected to the greatest difficulties, from a disinclination on the part of foreigners to buy; but we never yet heard, and it may be safely affirmed that we never shall hear, of their refusing to sell. It is true that France, and indeed the whole Continent, was very inadequately supplied with colonial produce during a part of last war: But she was ill supplied, not because *her* colonies had been conquered by England, but because of the Continental system;—because she herself had resolved to exclude colonial productions from every market in which she had an ascendency. We deny that a single instance can be mentioned of a nation wanting colonial produce, and willing to pay for it, being unable to obtain any quantity she required. Prussia and Germany, though they have neither ships nor colonies, are just as well and regularly supplied as either England or Holland; and they obtain these supplies in precisely the same way that we obtain them,—that is, by giving an equivalent portion of the produce of their land and labour in exchange for them. It is a radical error, indeed, to suppose that the supply of colonial goods *can* be monopolized. Sugar is not a staple product of the West Indies only; but of the East Indies, Brazil, Mexico, and Louisiana. The same may be said of coffee; and it is now clearly ascertained that the spices, which were formerly thought to be an exclusive production of the Moluccas, succeed equally well in Cayenne and other places. The commodities which we call Colonial, ought in fact to be called *tropical*; for they are to be found almost everywhere between the tropics; and the idea of monopolizing them is therefore wholly out of the question.

5. We have now gone over some of the more prominent of the advantages that are usually supposed to be derived from the monopoly of the colonial supply, and have shown that they are almost entirely imaginary. But there is one on which much stress has latterly been laid, and which deserves, therefore, a more minute examination. It has been said, that though the increased demand, caused by the forced exclusion of foreign goods from the colonial market, for certain species of commodities produced by the mother country, may not be *directly* productive of advantage to her, it is *indirectly* so, by enlarging the field for the employment of capital, and consequently raising the rate of profit. But it will be found that this statement, how plausible soever it may at first sight appear, is really just as untenable as the rest. The truth is, that *the* RATE *of profit is not in the slightest degree dependent on the magnitude of the field for the employment of capital; but that it is determined entirely by the productiveness of industry at the time.* Profits consist of the excess, or the value of the excess, of the commodities produced by the expenditure of a given quantity of capital and labour, over that original amount of capital and labour, or its value. It is plain then that they must be wholly unaffected by the mere *extension* of the field for the employment of capital, however great that extension may be. Suppose, to illustrate this principle, that ten millions of acres of land were added, by a fiat of Providence, to Great Britain; the effect that this addition to the soil of the country, or to the existing field for the employment of capital, would have on the rate of profit, would depend entirely on the circumstance, *whether this new land was of the same, or of greater productive power, than the poorest soils now under cultivation.* If it were of the same degree of productiveness as these poor soils, we might, if we chose, expend 500 or 1000 millions in its cultivation, but it is obvious that no addition would thereby be made to the *rate* of profit. If the farmer of the worst land now cultivated gets a return of 10 quarters or of 10*l.* for a certain outlay of capital, he will evidently get just the same return if he lays out the same capital on any other quantity of equally poor land. It is true, that if the new land added to the country were of *greater productive power than the worst quality now cultivated,* the rate of profit would rise; but it would rise, not because the field for the investment of capital had been enlarged, but because it had become more productive—because the same outlay of capital that yields only a return of 10 quarters or of 10*l.* on the last land now cultivated, would then perhaps yield a return of 15 quarters or of 15*l.*

But then it is said, that the monopoly of the colony trade has

this very effect—that it renders the field for the employment of capital more productive as well as more extensive: We are told, and the authority of Dr Smith is appealed to in support of the statement, that when new and naturally advantageous channels of foreign commerce are discovered, (and we shall concede that the same reasoning will apply, if they are the result of a monopoly), the merchants who first engage in them realize larger profits than ordinary, and that these larger profits tempt capitalists to withdraw their stocks from less lucrative employments, so that the supply of commodities produced for the home market is diminished; which, as the demand continues the same, necessarily occasions a general rise of prices and profits. But, among other services rendered by Mr Ricardo to the science of political economy, he has shown the fallacy of this statement. It is clear, that after new channels of commerce are opened, whether by means of a monopoly or otherwise, there must either be the *same*, a *greater*, or a *less* amount of the national revenue expended in the purchase of foreign commodities than before. If, in the *first* place, the *same* amount of revenue is laid out in the purchase of these commodities as before, there will be just the same amount of revenue to lay out on articles produced at home, and no change whatever will be occasioned: If, in the *second* place, a *greater* amount of revenue should be laid out in the purchase of foreign articles; then, as there must be a proportionally less demand for articles produced at home, a corresponding portion of the capital and labour previously employed in producing commodities for the home market will be set free, and will henceforth be employed in the production of the commodities sent abroad to pay the greater amount of goods imported; and hence it appears, inasmuch as every increased demand for foreign produce necessarily brings along with it the means of procuring the augmented supply without requiring any additional capital, that neither prices nor profits could be affected by such an increase: And if, in the *third* and last case, owing to the greater cheapness of foreign produce, a *less* proportion of the revenue of the country should be devoted to their purchase, a less amount of capital would be required to produce the commodities exported to pay them; and the capital thus set free would, of course, be employed in producing the increased supply of commodities for the home market, on which the portion of revenue saved in the purchase of foreign commodities must, in future, be expended. And thus it appears, that in every case—whether the *same*, a *greater*, or a *less* proportion of the national revenue be laid out in the purchase of foreign commodities—the discovery or formation of new channels of commerce cannot of itself have any effect whatever on the rate of profit.

It is true indeed, that if foreign commerce enables us to *import* corn, or any other article which necessarily enters into the consumption of the labourer, at a cheaper rate than it can be produced at home, it will have the effect to lower wages and raise profits. It is obvious, however, that this is a result that could not possibly be brought about by *the monopoly* of the supply of all the colonies and countries in the world. It does not depend on exportation, but on importation,—on liberty being granted to import corn from *those who can furnish it at the lowest price, whether they be dependent colonists or independent foreigners.*

II. But the colonial system has been productive of other and still more serious disadvantages. The double monopoly by which the colonists are not only obliged to *buy* all the foreign commodities they require in the markets of the mother country, but to *sell* their own surplus products in them, could not have been made effectual had foreign competitors been allowed to enter these markets with similar and cheaper goods. In order, therefore, that the colonists might be compelled to dispose of their peculiar productions exclusively in the markets of the mother country, the latter has been compelled to dismiss all foreigners from them, and to give the colonists the monopoly of her supply. It would be impossible, for example, to dispose of the sugars of Jamaica and Barbadoes in London, were the sugars of Brazil and Cuba allowed to come into fair competition with them. The latter have, therefore, been excluded; and while the British merchants have had a complete monopoly of the Jamaica market, the Jamaica merchants have had an equally complete monopoly of the market of Great Britain. There has thus been a *reciprocity of injuries, and not of advantages;* and the colony trade, instead of being a source of wealth, has been rendered, on both sides, a source of poverty, vexation, and disgust. Were it not for the perverse, and most injurious regulations to which this system has given rise, we might supply ourselves with sugar from the East Indies or South America, for a great deal less than it now costs to buy it from the West India planters. This is a much more serious loss than is generally supposed. Sugar has become a necessary equally indispensable to the poor and the rich. The quantity of West India sugar annually consumed in Great Britain, may, we believe, be taken on an average at about 380,000,000 of pounds weight. And it has been repeatedly shown, that a reduction of the duties on sugar, from the East Indies and South America, to the same level with those laid on West India sugars, would enable us to obtain as good sugar for 4½d. per

lib. as now costs 6d.; but taking the difference at only 1d. per lib. it would make on the above mentioned quantity a saving of no less than 1,583,000*l.* a year! *

* It appears from a Parliamentary Paper (No. 186, Session 1825), that the total quantity of all sorts of sugar imported into Great Britain and Ireland, in the year ended 5th January 1825, amounted to 4,413,147 cwts; and the total quantity exported to foreign countries during the same year, amounted to 998,947 cwts., leaving a balance of 3,414,200 cwts., or 382,390,400 lib. for home consumption. It appears also from the same Paper, that the total *nett* produce of the duties derived from sugar consumed in Great Britain during the year 1824, amounted to 4,223,241*l.*; and the total nett produce of those derived from sugar consumed in Ireland for the same year, to 418,663*l.*; making together an aggregate of 4,636,904*l.*

A valuable little work, containing a great variety of statistical details, recently published by Mr Marshall of London, and entitled, '*Statistical Illustrations of the British Empire,*' gives the following account of the

Territorial Extent, Imports into England, and Slave Population of the British Colonial Possessions in the West Indies and South America in 1823.

COLONIES.	Territorial Extent in Stat. Acres	Productions Imported from into GREAT BRITAIN in 1823: Cwts. of Sugar.	Cwts. of Coffee.	Gallons of Rum.	Number of SLAVES: Male.	Female.	Total.
1 Jamaica . . .	4,080,000	1,417,758	169,734	2,951,110	170,466	171,916	342,382
2 Demarara, *S. Amer.*	1,000,000	607,870	54,147	941,194	43,227	34,149	77,376
3 Barbadoes . .	239,000	314,630	236	351	36,733	41,612	73,34[illegible]
4 Grenada . .	227,000	247,369	368	301,866	12,355	13,231	25,586
5 St Vincents . .	279,000	232,577	53	80,439	12,007	12,245	24,252
6 Trinidad . . .	2,880,000	186,891	2,953	8,586	13,155	10,382	23,537
7 Antigua . . .	256,000	135,466	*none*	28,241	14,454	16,531	30,985
8 Tobago . . .	204,000	113,015	*Do.*	309,829	6,952	7,363	14,314
9 St Kitts . . .	38,400	76,181	*Do.*	42,944	9,505	10,312	19,817
10 St Lucia . . .	203,000	62,148	3,352	4,807	6,297	7,497	13,794
11 Berbice, *South Am.*	1,500,000	56,000	18,537	74,221	13,007	10,349	23,356
12 Nevis	200,000	44,283	*none*	16,584	4,583	4,678	9,261
13 Dominica . .	230,000	39,013	17,136	14,310	7,919	8,636	16,554
14 Montserat . .	11,000	24,466	*none*	42,943	3,032	3,473	6,505
15 Tortola . . .	80,000	21,583	*Do.*	16,168	2,[illegible]75	3,485	6,460
16 Bermudas . .	30,000	3,415	769	218	2,505	2,671	5,176
17 Bahamas . . .	500,000	986	1[illegible]0	*none*	5,529	5,279	10,808
Tot. British Colonies	11,957,400	3,583,660	267,464	4,833,844	364,701	363,808	728,509
From Do. indirect.		15,296	4,628	30,937			
Foreign: St Thomas . .	20.000		7,250				
Foreign: St Domingo .	19,000,000		44,422				
Foreign: Cuba . . .	28,000,000	122,170	24,057				
Foreign: Colombia . .	*vast but undefined*		3,604				
Foreign: Brazil . . .	*vast but undefined*	71,438	12,467				
British INDIA . .	*vast but undefined*	219,580	36,734				
Total Import of Sugar & Coffee into Great Britain. . .		4,012,144	400,626				
Do. in addition Do. Do. into Ireland.		190,809	17,223				

*** *The power of production in these territories is unlimited; considerable quantities go direct to Europe on British, as well as on general account. From the 17 Brit. Colonies about 15,000,000lb. of Cotton Wool, 2,000,000lb. of Pimento, and various other articles are also Imported.*

It is contended, however, that when a greater quantity of produce is imported into any country than is required for its use, and when the surplus is exported to foreigners, the price of the portion sold at home will be determined by the price paid for the portion exported. Now, it is said that this is the case with British sugar. We annually import about a *fourth* part more sugar from our Colonies than is required to supply the home consumption of the empire; and, as the surplus is sent abroad, to be sold in the markets of the Continent, in competition with the sugars of Brazil and Cuba, it is affirmed that the prices of sugar in the home market must be identical with them, and that the British consumer is not laid under the disadvantage we have supposed. But, though the principle stated in this argument is sound, there is a circumstance overlooked that renders it wholly inapplicable to the case in question. The truth is, that British plantation sugars in bond always maintain a higher value, by several shillings a cwt., than foreign sugars of the same quality; and the reason of this difference is, that we allow a drawback on every cwt. of refined sugar exported, which every one knows amounts to from 6s. to 7s. more than the duty payable on the raw sugar of which it is made; and this excess is, therefore, really equivalent to a bounty of 6s. or 7s. a cwt. on its exportation. In consequence, we export only refined sugars; and the effect of the bounty is to enable the refiners for exportation to give 6s. or 7s. a cwt. more for the sugars bought by them than they otherwise could give; and thus to raise, according to the principle already stated, the price of all the sugar in the market to the same extent. We have already seen, that the aggregate quantity of sugar imported into Great Britain and Ireland, during last year, amounted to 4,413,147 cwts.; and, supposing its price to have been, as it certainly was, advanced 6s. 6d. a cwt. by the operation of the bounty on refined sugar, it will follow, that this bounty must have cost the home consumers of sugar 1,434,000*l.*, agreeing very nearly with our previous estimate.

A similar system has been adopted with respect to most other articles imported from our colonies. We defy any one to point out a single benefit, of any sort whatever, derived by us from the possession of Canada, and our other colonies in North America. They are productive of heavy expense to Great Britain, but of nothing else. We are well convinced that it is a moderate computation to affirm, that these provinces have already cost us 60 or 70 millions; and, not contented with what we have done, we still continue to lay three or four times the duty on the timber of the North of Europe, that we lay on the

timber imported from Canada and Nova Scotia. We are astonished that Messrs Robinson and Huskisson should tolerate such a system. Not only is it completely at variance with all the enlarged and liberal principles they have so often professed and acted upon, but it is in the highest degree injurious to all the best interests of the country. It has done much to cripple and destroy the advantageous commerce we formerly carried on with the Baltic; while it adds greatly to the price, and deteriorates the quality of one of the most important articles imported into the country. And for whom is this sacrifice really made? For whom are the people of Britain made to pay a high price for inferior timber? The answer is obvious. Every man of sense, whether in the Cabinet or out of it, knows, that Canada must, at no distant period, be merged in the American republic. And certainly John Bull discovers no very great impatience of taxation, when he quietly allows his pockets to be drained, in order to clear and fertilize a province for the use of his rival Jonathan.

But even these do not form the only burdens imposed on us by the colonial system. It appears, from a Paper printed by order of the House of Commons, a copy of which is subjoined,* that the mere military expense attending the government of our West India and North American colonies, costs the Treasury

* Abstract of the actual Disbursements of the several Commissaries upon Foreign Stations, charged in the Army Extraordinaries for the Year ending 25th December 1821, and paid by Great Britain, exclusive of the Revenues collected in the several Colonies, and other Expenses voted in the Army and Ordnance Estimates for that Year:—

1. Canada	L.397,629	14	4¼
2. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick	105,586	2	4
3. Newfoundland	13,285	10	7¼
4. Bermuda	28,193	6	7¼
5. Bahama Islands	8,808	13	10½
6. Windward and Leeward Islands and Colonies	321,480	8	10¾
7. Jamaica	114,818	15	6
	L.989,802	12	2
8. Cape of Good Hope	171,012	17	2½
9. Mauritius	41,100	7	4¾
10. Mediterranean	234,643	11	3
11. Gibraltar	118,383	8	0¾
12. Sierra Leone and Gambia	65,395	13	7¾
13. Heligoland	6,809	0	3¼
	L.1,626,237	10	0

of Great Britain, *in time of peace, little less than a* MILLION A YEAR, *exclusive of the revenue collected in them.* And they have the farther disadvantage of multiplying the chances of misunderstanding and contests with foreign powers, and of making a vast addition to the expense of war. *

Such being the case with respect to our colonial possessions, it is not easy to see how we could sustain any injury from the total breaking up of the colonial monopoly, or even from the total and unconditional abandonment of these dependencies. But besides the statements on which we have already taken the liberty to animadvert, the advocates of the colonial system contend that we cannot break up the monopoly;—they contend that we made a *contract* with the West India planters, by which they agreed to buy the foreign products they wanted, exclusively in the markets of England, on condition of their having the exclusive right to supply these markets with colonial goods; and that the planters having embarked their capital on the faith of this contract, are entitled to claim its enforcement. Unluckily, however, for the West India interest, there is not even the shadow of a foundation for this statement. The Parliament of England never entered into any contract of any description whatever with the planters. They passed certain acts regulating the colonial trade, in the same way as they pass acts in relation to any other branch of internal or external policy. But it was not stipulated that these acts were to continue in force for any specified time. Every one of them might have been repealed the year after it was enacted; and, in point of fact, many of them have been repealed, and others very much modified, without any one ever presuming to say that a contract had been violated in doing so. What should we think were the landlords to insist that the Corn-law of 1815 was to be viewed in the light of a contract with them, and that Parliament was not entitled to repeal or modify that law, without previously compensating them for any loss they might sustain from its abandonment? Would not such a monstrous doctrine be scouted by every man of sense in the country? and yet it is not one whit more absurd than the doctrine of those who contend, that we are bound either to continue the colonial

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* 'Exertions,' says Lord Sheffield, 'must be made somewhere during war; but it may be remarked, that *the expense of defending the West India Islands, by sea alone, during the last* (American) *war, cost Britain a larger sum than would purchase the fee-simple of these islands.* The detention of our fleet in the West Indies, was a principal cause of the loss of America.'—*Observations on the Commerce of America*, p. 259.

monopoly, or to pay the colonists for leave to abandon it. Opinions such as these are not only wholly destitute of any foundation in fact, but they are subversive of every principle of improvement: They would go to eternize the worst errors and absurdities, and are utterly inconsistent with all the ends and objects of government.

But the colonists farther contend, that although they had no right founded on the principles now stated to the monopoly of the home market, still we could not deprive them of it without gross injustice. They allege that the abolition of the slave trade has placed them under a relative disadvantage, as compared with the planters of Brazil and Cuba:—that it has had the effect to raise the price of slaves, or, in other words, of labour in our colonies, much above what it is in the colonies of those powers who still carry it on; and that justice requires we should either force those powers to abolish the slave trade, or restore the right of carrying it on to our own colonists, before we open our markets indiscriminately to all who have colonial products to dispose of. This is certainly the strongest of all the arguments advanced by the colonists in favour of their monopoly; but it is, notwithstanding, destitute of any real weight. A slave who has been bred in the West Indies, who has been trained to habits of subordination and industry, is much more valuable than one who has been newly imported from Africa; and it does not by any means follow, that because the latter fetches a smaller money price than the former, he is therefore really cheaper. The truth is, that the disadvantage under which our West India colonists labour, in coming into competition with foreigners, does not originate in their being prevented from importing fresh slaves, but in the inferior productiveness of Jamaica, and our other West India islands, compared with Cuba, St Domingo, or Brazil. The fact of this inferiority was completely established by the evidence taken before the Privy Council in 1789; and if we maintain the colonial monopoly until our colonists can raise sugar as cheaply as it may be raised in Cuba or Brazil, we must maintain it until Providence shall have changed the soil of those countries!

But conceding that it might, under existing circumstances, be improper and impolitic to admit the sugar of Brazil and Cuba into our markets, on account of the additional stimulus it might give to the importation of slaves into these countries, that is no reason why we should exclude the sugar of such other foreign countries as have interdicted the slave trade. Now, this is the case with Columbia, with Louisiana, and with the colonies of Holland. No slave can be introduced into any

of these countries; and by allowing their sugar to be imported, we shall be introducing the sound principle of free and fair competition in the place of monopoly, without laying our own colonists under any relative disadvantage, and without giving any encouragement to the slave trade; while, if we exclude it, it is plain we do so, not because we wish to discourage the slave trade, but because we wish to foster and protect that monopoly which has been productive of so many evils.

Not only, however, do we exclude the sugars of the Dutch colonies, Columbia, and Louisiana, but we actually lay 10s. a cwt. of higher duties on the sugar imported from our own dominions in the East Indies, than on that which is imported from the West! Not satisfied with giving the West India planters a monopoly of the home market against foreigners, we have given them a monopoly against our own subjects in the East. It is impossible to speak too strongly in condemnation of this arrangement; not that we mean to insinuate that the East Indians have any right whatever to be *more* favourably treated than the West Indians; but we contend that they have a clear and undoubted right to be *as* favourably treated. To attempt to enrich the latter, by preventing the former from bringing their produce to our market, or by loading it with higher duties, is not only to prefer the interests of *one* million, and those —we do not say it disparagingly of the planters—mostly slaves, to the interests of *one hundred* millions of subjects, but is totally inconsistent with, and subversive of, every principle of impartial justice and sound policy.

It is said, however, that slavery exists in Hindostan as well as in Jamaica, and that, by reducing the duties on East India sugar, and facilitating its cultivation, by allowing Europeans to purchase and farm land, we should not get rid of the evil of slavery, but would be merely substituting the produce of one species of slave labour for another. Now, admitting for a moment that this statement is well founded, still it is certain, from the cheapness of free labour in Hindostan, that no slaves ever have been or ever can be imported into that country—And hence it is obvious, that by substituting the sugars of the East for those of the West, we should neither add to the number, nor deteriorate the condition of the existing slave population in our dominions, while we should save above a *million and a half* in the purchase of one of the principal necessaries of life, at the same time that we subverted a system of monopoly, and laid the foundations of a new and extensive intercourse with India—a market which may be enlarged to almost any conceivable extent.

But it is much worse than idle to pretend to say that

East India sugar should not be imported, because it is raised by slaves as well as that which is imported from our colonies in the West Indies. There is in fact no room for a comparison between the state of the slaves in Hindostan and Jamaica. The former may justly be said to be freemen when compared with the latter. Our readers are already sufficiently acquainted with the condition of the slaves in the West Indies; and the following extract from a work of Sir Henry Colebrooke, one of the ablest of the East India Company's servants, will serve to make them acquainted with the condition of the slaves of Hindostan. 'Slavery,' says Sir Henry, 'is not unknown 'in Bengal. Throughout some districts, the labours of husbandry are executed chiefly by bond servants. In certain districts, the ploughmen are mostly slaves of the peasants for 'whom they labour; but, treated by their masters more like 'hereditary servants or like emancipated hinds, than like 'purchased slaves, they labour with cheerful diligence and unforced zeal. In some places also, the landholders have a 'claim to the servitude of thousands among the inhabitants of 'their estates. This claim, which is seldom enforced, and 'which, in many instances, is become quite obsolete, is founded 'on some traditional rights acquired many generations ago in 'a state of society different from the present: and slaves of 'this description do, in fact, enjoy every privilege of a freeman, except the name, or at worst they must be considered 'as villeins attached to the glebe, rather than as bondsmen 'labouring for the sole benefit of their owners. Indeed, 'throughout India, the relation of master and slave appears to 'impose the duty of protection and cherishment on the master, as much as that of fidelity and obedience on the slave; 'and their mutual conduct is consistent with the sense of such 'an obligation, since it is marked with gentleness and indulgence on the one side, and with zeal and loyalty on the other.' Those who can find any thing in this description similar to the condition of the slaves in the West Indies, or who can found on it any argument against allowing East India sugar to be imported on the same terms as that of our Western possessions, must certainly be endowed with very peculiar means of perception, and very extraordinary logical powers.

It is difficult, however, to drive the West Indians from the field. No sooner has the fallacy of one set of arguments been exposed, than they are ready with another. Not contented with endeavouring to show that the monopoly of the colony trade is favourable to the wealth of the country, they also contend that it is essential to its *security!* They argue, that in the event of

the monopoly being abolished, our markets would be chiefly supplied with foreigners; and that these foreigners would naturally be inclined, in imitation of the policy on which we have so long acted, to lay such duties on articles exported in a foreign, as compared with those laid on articles exported in a home ship, as would cause the exclusive employment of the latter; and that our mercantile navy being thus crippled, the ruin of our maritime power would inevitably follow! But if the trade in colonial produce were quite free, the constantly operating principle of competition would effectually prevent any foreign power from attempting to act in the way just mentioned; and even supposing a combination to be entered into for that purpose, the supplies we could derive from the East, would render it quite nugatory and ineffectual.

Granting, however, that in the event of the colonial monopoly being abolished we might be obliged to use sugar that had been imported exclusively in foreign ships; that would not render us in the least degree disposed to question the propriety of its abolition. It has been usually supposed, that an extensive mercantile is absolutely necessary to the possession of a great warlike navy; and the most vexatious and injurious restraints have been laid on commerce for the sake of forcing the employment of ships and sailors. We are satisfied, however, that this idea is wholly without foundation. All that is required for the attainment of naval power, is the command of convenient harbours, and of wealth sufficient to build and man ships. However paradoxical it may at first sight appear, it is nevertheless unquestionably true, that *the navy of Great Britain might be as formidable as it now is, or, if that was desirable, infinitely more so, though we had not a single merchant ship.* It is admitted on all hands that the only use of merchant ships, in respect to national defence, is the means afforded by them of breeding up and training sailors, who may afterwards be made available to the manning of the fleet. But, why take this roundabout method? Why not breed up sailors directly in men-of-war? A sailor who has been bred in a merchantman has a great deal to learn before he can be a good man-of-war sailor. But if a sufficient number of men-of-war were always kept afloat, and manned wholly during peace with able-bodied seamen, then, it is obvious, that by taking on board the proportion of landmen and boys allowed by the Admiralty regulations, the supply of seamen might be kept up during war as well as during peace, independently altogether of the merchant service; at the same time that the crews would gain greatly in discipline and efficiency. Besides, it is perfectly certain, that until this system is adopted, the great and monstrous evil of

impressment cannot possibly be got rid of. The number of sailors now on the peace establishment amounts to about 25,000, and there are very near 170,000 seamen employed in the merchant service. * Now, suppose that a war broke out, and observe what the effect must be. Instead of 25,000, we shall then most probably want from 70,000 to 80,000 sailors for the fleet. But, instead of diminishing, war may probably increase the demand for our merchant ships; nor, while we retain the ascendancy at sea, is there any considerable prospect of its materially diminishing it. Unless, however, it were to *diminish the demand for merchantmen to the extent of about* A HALF, it is evident we should not be able to man the fleet without resorting to impressment. The fifty or sixty thousand additional sailors wanted for that purpose cannot be created by the publication of a declaration of war. They can only be got from the mercantile service; and if the merchants have a demand for them, recourse must unavoidably be had to impressment. Instead, therefore, of keeping so small a force as twenty or thirty thousand able-bodied seamen afloat during peace, that number ought to be increased to at least fifty or sixty thousand; and, if this were done, we should, on the breaking out of a war, be able, by sending the ordinary proportion of landmen and boys to sea, instantly to man such a powerful and effective fleet as would suffice to annihilate all those that could possibly be opposed to it; and we should do this without being obliged to resort to any sort of compulsion, and without giving the slightest shock to commerce. The improvement of the fleet, the abolition of impressment, and the relief of commerce from a multitude of oppressive restraints, are all objects of vast national importance. And to realize them all, we have only to act on just and fair principles—to keep an adequate number of sailors afloat during peace; and, instead of disgracing the country, and degrading the naval service by filling his Majesty's ships with sailors kidnapped from merchantmen, and the sweepings of our jails, to make them nurseries for the instruction of the *volunteers* who are afterwards to lead them to victory.

This plan has been highly approved by many distinguished naval officers, and the only objection worth alluding to that can be made to it is founded on the score of expense. But, though it were to cost a few hundred thousand pounds a year more than the present system, we should think it a very miserable species of economy to hesitate about incurring such an expense, to give additional force and efficacy to our naval strength, and to rid the country of the injustice and misery caused by impressment. In point of fact, however, the plan we have ventured to propose

* Annual Finance Book for 1824, p. 309.

would really be less costly than that now acted upon. It would occasion a little more expense during peace; but then it would not, as is the case under the present system, occasion any disinclination on the part of young men to enter the sea service, or have the effect artificially to raise seamen's wages, so as to afford them some compensation for the violence and unjust treatment to which they are exposed. 'The custom of impress-'ment,' says Sir Matthew Decker, one of the most intelligent merchants that this country has ever produced, 'puts *a free-born* '*British sailor on the footing of a Turkish slave.* The Grand 'Seignior cannot do a more absolute act, than to order a man 'to be dragged away from his family, and against his will run 'his head before the mouth of a cannon; and, if such acts 'should be frequent in Turkey upon any one set of useful men, '*would it not drive them away to other countries, and thin their* '*numbers yearly? and would not the remaining few double or* '*triple their wages?—which is the case of our sailors in time of* '*war, to the great detriment of our commerce.*' * It might perhaps cost a little more, though that is an extremely doubtful point, to man the fleet under the proposed plan; but, as its adoption would most undoubtedly have the effect to reduce the cost of manning our merchant ships, and to abolish impressment, any expense incurred on the one hand would be infinitely more than compensated on the other.

It is perhaps unnecessary to advert particularly to the statements of those defenders of the colonial monopoly, who tell us that its abolition would occasion not only the loss of the market the colonies afford for our produce, but that we should also lose the large revenue we derive from the commodities imported from them! The fallacy of this statement is so gross and glaring, as hardly to require to be pointed out. We should not certainly consume less sugar, coffee, or timber, because we were left at liberty to import these articles from whatever markets we chose. If we imported them from foreigners, then, as foreigners would not send us their products *gratis*—though, if they did, we presume it would not be thought a very serious calamity—we should obviously have to export the same quantity of goods to them that we now export to the colonies. It is evident, too, that it is the people of Britain who pay the whole of the *four millions* a year derived from the duty on sugar; and, supposing the duty to continue the same, and the same quantity to be consumed, the revenue will remain constant, whether the sugar

* Essay on the Causes of the Decline of Foreign Trade, p. 24, ed. 1756.

come from Java or Jamaica. No one has hitherto taken it into his head to affirm that the Chinese pay any portion whatever of the *three and a half* millions a year of duty derived from tea: But it would be just as true to say that they did this, as to say that the West Indians pay one single farthing of the duties laid on the commodities we are forced to buy from them.

In every point of view, then, in which this subject can be considered, it seems obvious that the restraints on the colony trade are alike impolitic and pernicious; and that their abolition is imperiously called for by a just regard to the public interests. It is indeed most probably true, that the granting of liberty freely to import colonial products, either from our dominions in Hindostan, or from foreign markets, would be injurious to a considerable number of our West Indian planters and mortgagees. But that is no reason why the colonial monopoly should be indefinitely extended. The real effect of the present system is to impose a heavy and most oppressive tax on the consumers of colonial produce in great Britain, for the purpose of tempting a few planters and merchants—for they are but a few when compared to the rest of the community—to linger on in a business which they admit cannot support itself, and which must, therefore, be essentially disadvantageous. At the same time, we are ready to acknowledge, that no wise, just, and liberal government, will ever rashly adopt any measure, however expedient and proper in itself, that might have the immediate effect to injure a considerable class of its subjects. Every change in the public economy of a great nation ought to be cautiously and gradually effected. The West Indians are entitled to demand that a reasonable time should be allowed them, either to withdraw entirely from their business, or to prepare for withstanding the free competition of foreigners; and they are also entitled to demand, that all those restrictions which fetter their commerce with other countries, should be repealed previously to their being deprived of the monopoly of the home market. But this is *all* the West Indians can justly claim; and to grant them more, would be to make a wanton and unnecessary sacrifice of the interests of the vast majority of the public.

But if no change ought to be suddenly or violently brought about, the less delay ought to take place in commencing the return to a better and sounder system. And considered in this point of view, the changes lately introduced into the colonial system, and detailed in one of the Speeches before us, deserve very great praise. The intercourse that had been maintained previously to the American war between our colonies in the

West Indies, and those that now form the Republic of the United States, had subsequently been subjected to some very oppressive restrictions. These had been imposed by us, partly in the view of depriving the United States of the market they had had in Jamaica and our other islands for provisions and lumber, and partly in the view of securing the monopoly of their supply to Canada. These restraints, as well as those on their trade with Europe, had always been loudly and justly complained of by the planters. But no adequate effort was made to redress the grievance until 1822, when Mr Robinson, who had been struck with the impolicy of the existing regulations, set about introducing a better system. For this purpose, Mr R. brought two bills into Parliament, which were passed into laws,—the *first*, permitting a free intercourse to be carried on between any countries in America and our colonies, either in the *ships of those countries* or in British ships; and the *second*, permitting the colonies to trade directly with foreign Europe, in articles of their own growth and production, provided the trade was carried on *exclusively in British ships*. This was a very great concession; but then it allowed a privilege to the Americans, or rather to the citizens of the United States, they only being possessed of a commercial marine, which it denied to all the powers of Europe; and there were also many exceptions to the articles that could be imported into the colonies from America. We are happy, however, to have to state, that the bill introduced by Mr Huskisson during the late Session has remedied these defects. 'I propose,' said Mr H., when introducing his bill, 'to admit a free intercourse between all our colonies and 'other countries, either in British ships, or in the ships of 'those countries, allowing the latter to import all articles, 'the growth, produce, or manufacture of the country to 'which the ship belongs, and to export from such colonies all 'articles whatever of the growth, produce, or manufacture, either to the country from which such ship came, or to any other part of the world; the United Kingdom and all its dependencies only excepted.' These just and enlarged views have been adopted by Parliament; and the colonies are also indebted to Mr Huskisson for extending to them the benefits of the warehousing system, for the abolition of various heavy charges that were formerly paid by the ships entering their ports, and for a variety of other subordinate and beneficial alterations.

A great step has thus been made towards the total abolition of the colony system. The colonists were entitled to demand, that they should be exclusively entitled to supply us with colo-

nial products, so long as we forced them to resort exclusively to our markets for what they had to buy. But now that we have relieved them from these vexatious restraints—that we allow them to resort to all the markets of the world—they have no longer the shadow of a claim to the monopoly of the British market. It is plain, therefore, that ministers will not be treating both parties impartially and fairly, if they stop where they now are. Having done so much, they must do more. Having deprived the merchants of Great Britain of the monopoly of the colony market, they are bound in consistency, and in justice to the people of Britain, to deprive the colonists of the monopoly of the British market. The ablest defenders of the monopoly system have admitted, that one part of it could not be supported independently of the rest—that they must either stand or fall together. '*The British dominions,*' says Lord Sheffield, '*are as much entitled to the monopoly of the markets of the* '*British West Indies, as the latter are entitled to those of the* '*former; and whenever that monopoly is given up,* IT WILL BE 'THE HIGHEST ABSURDITY NOT TO OPEN ALL THE BRITISH 'PORTS TO FOREIGN RAW SUGARS.' *

But it has been said, that if we deprive the colonists of the monopoly of the British market, they will no longer have any inducement to continue their connexion with us, and that they will revolt! Far, however, from being injurious, the statements we have now submitted prove, beyond all question, that the separation of the colonies would be a very great gain to us. But were it otherwise, we need be under no alarm on that head. Suppose we were to withdraw our fleets and troops from Jamaica, what would be the state of that colony in a month after? We may depend upon it, the colonists know their own interest too well ever to think of dissolving their connexion with England. As long as we choose to employ our troops and ships in the protection of those who are totally unable to protect themselves, so long shall we have abundance of West India sugar-gardens and charnel-houses.

We hope it will not be supposed, from any thing that we have now stated, that we consider the foundation of colonial establishments as, generally speaking, inexpedient. We entertain no such opinion. It is not to the establishment of colonies, provided they are placed in an advantageous situation, but to the trammels that have been laid on their industry, and the interference exercised by the mother country in their domestic

* Observations on the Commerce of the American States, p. 260.

concerns, that we object. Every individual ought to have full liberty to leave his native country; and occasions very frequently occur, in which governments may advantageously interfere to settle emigrants in foreign countries, and when the soundest policy dictates the propriety of their supporting and protecting them until they are in a situation to support and protect themselves. There can be no question whatever that Europe has been prodigiously benefited by the colonization of America. The colonists carried the arts, the sciences, the language, and the religion of the most civilized communities of the Old World, to regions of vast extent and great natural fertility, occupied only by a few miserable savages. The empire of civilization has in consequence been immeasurably extended: And while the experience afforded by the rise and progress of communities placed under such novel circumstances, has served to elucidate and establish many most important and fundamental principles in government and legislation, Europe has been enriched by the vast variety of new products America has afforded to stimulate the inventive powers of genius, and to reward the patient hand of industry.

But whatever may have been the advantages hitherto derived from the colonization of America, they are trifling compared to what they would have been, had the European powers only left the colonists at liberty to avail themselves of the advantages of their situation, and avoided encumbering themselves with the government of extensive territories three thousand miles distant. Fortunately, however, a new era is already begun—*Novus sæclorum nascitur ordo!* The monopoly of the trade of America is now nearly destroyed, and her independence almost achieved. From Canada to Cape Horn, every port is ready to receive adventurers from Europe; and a boundless field has, in consequence, been opened, for the reception of our surplus population, and for the advantageous employment of European arts, capital, and skill. The progress of America is no longer problematical. She *must* continue, for centuries to come, to advance with giant steps in the career of improvement. The prodigious extent of her fertile and unoccupied lands, the mildness and salubrity of her climate, the variety of her natural productions, the immense extent of her inland navigation, the capaciousness and safety of her harbours, all conspire to secure her, for a very long period, against those revulsions and contingencies which are always affecting old settled and fully peopled countries, and mark her out as the seat of future opulence, science, and civilization.

ART. II. *Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrina Christiana libri duo posthumi.* A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON, translated from the original by Charles R. Sumner, M. A. &c. &c. 1825.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1823, Mr Lemon, Deputy Keeper of the State Papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office, met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign despatches written by Milton, while he filled the office of Secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials and the Rye-house Plot. The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed '*To Mr Skinner, Merchant.*' On examination, the large manuscript proved to be the long lost Essay on the Doctrines of Christianity, which, according to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the Government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great Poet.

Mr Sumner, who was commanded by his Majesty to edite and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honourable to his talents and to his character. His version is not indeed very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written,—though not exactly in the style of the Prize Essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. He does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not in short sacrifice sense

and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words

'That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.'

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. What Denham with great felicity says of Cowley, may be applied to him. He wears the garb, but not the clothes of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. He professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of Scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox opinions which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement; particularly his Arianism, and his notions on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the Paradise Lost without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox, or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days, and this Essay will follow the *Defensio Populi* to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn, to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish however to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint, till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors, by exhibiting some relic of him—a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same princi-

ple, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day, to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his Poetry that Milton is best known; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works, they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied, by their own powers, the want of instruction, and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created; he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions for these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavourable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born 'an age too late.' For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of his clumsy ridicule. The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

We think that, as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are gene-

rally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits it, augmented, by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs Marcet's little Dialogues on Political Economy, could teach Montague or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive, and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical, that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge, but particularly in the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to pourtray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury. He may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius, or he

may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lacrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood will affect the tears of his Niobe, or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in the Fable of the Bees. But could Mandeville have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man,—a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if any thing which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean, not of course all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean, the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colours. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigour and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled.

> 'As imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.'

These are the fruits of the 'fine frenzy' which he ascribes to the poet,—a fine frenzy doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just; but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, every thing ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear, as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves can-

not speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps, she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enligtened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundancce of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones,—but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstacy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists, according to Plato, could not recite Homer without almost falling into convulsions.* The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping-knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which it calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hinderance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that pro-

* See the Dialogue between Socrates and Io.

ficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigour and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man, or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labour, and long meditation, employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education. He was a profound and elegant classical scholar: he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature: he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination: nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the middle ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly, imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the Paradise Lost should have written the Epistle to Manso was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality, and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, the richness of his fancy and the elevation of his sentiments give to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

> 'About him exercised heroic games
> 'The unarmed youth of heaven. But o'er their heads
> 'Celestial armoury, shield, helm, and spear,
> 'Hung bright, with diamond flaming and with gold.'

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of its fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt any thing like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal, and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton, is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests, not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the Iliad. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion; but takes the whole upon himself, and sets his images in so clear a light that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed, unless the mind of the reader cooperate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the key-note, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing, but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present, and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the me-

mory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonyme for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it, would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying 'Open 'Wheat,' 'Open Barley,' to the door which obeyed no sound but 'Open Sesame!' The miserable failure of Dryden in his attempt to rewrite some parts of the Paradise Lost is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations, we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known, or more frequently repeated, than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the moral scenery and manners of a distant country. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the school-room, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the Allegro and the Penseroso. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as ottar of roses differs from ordinary rose water, the close packed essence from the thin diluted mixture. They are indeed not so much poems, as collections of hints from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a Canto.

The Comus and the Samson Agonistes are works, which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. They are both Lyric poems in the form of Plays. There are perhaps no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant

as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter, or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was, that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr Newberry, in which a single moveable head goes round twenty different bodies; so that the same face looks out upon us successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters, patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers, the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his own emotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavoured to effect an amalgamation; but never with complete success. The Greek Drama, on the model of which the Samson was written, sprung from the Ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists cooperated with the circumstances under which Tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time, the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem, that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is clearly discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd: considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But, if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the re-

form further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly; much more highly than, in our opinion, he deserved. Indeed the caresses which this partiality leads him to bestow on 'sad Electra's poet,' sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairy-land kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that his veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the Samson Agonistes. Had he taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The Comus is framed on the model of the Italian Masque, as the Samson is framed on the model of the Greek Tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the Faithful Shepherdess, as the Faithful Shepherdess is to the Aminta, or the Aminta to the Pastor Fido. It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors, were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style: But false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire: But she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May-day. Whatever ornaments *she* wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

' Milton attended in the Comus to the distinction which he neglected in the Samson. He made it what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliliques; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. ' I should much commend, ' says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, ' the tragical ' part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain dorique ' delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly ' confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our lan- ' guage.' The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labour of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own Good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis, he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

' Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly or I can run,'

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the Elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides. *

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable

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* ' There eternal summer dwells,
And west winds, with musky wing,
About the cedared alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells:
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled scarf can show,
And drenches with Elysian dew,
(List, mortals, if your ears be true),
Beds of hyacinths and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound.'

poem, the Paradise Regained, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of that parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the Paradise Lost, we must readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the Paradise Lost to the Paradise Regained is not more decided than the superiority of the Paradise Regained to every poem which has since made its appearance. But our limits prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the Paradise Lost is the Divine Comedy. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves:—they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent, than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the colour, the sound, the smell the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain business-like manner, not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn, not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem, but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell, were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs, resembled the vast cemetery of Arles!

Now, let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan.

He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea-monster which the mariner mistakes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas; his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. 'His face seemed to me as 'long and as broad as the ball of St Peter's at Rome; and his 'other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which con-'cealed him from the waist downwards, neverthless showed so 'much of him, that three tall Germans would in vain have at-'tempted to reach to his hair.' We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar-house in the eleventh book of the Paradise Lost with the last ward of Malebolge in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery,—Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance, Death shaking his dart over them, but in spite of supplications, denying to strike. What says Dante? 'There was such a 'moan there, as there would be if all the sick who, between July 'and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the 'Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; 'and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from 'decayed limbs.'

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedency between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has, wisely or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The Divine Comedy is a personal narrative. Dante is the eyewitness and earwitness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death, who has read the dusky characters on the portal within which there is no hope, who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon, who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Diaghignazzo. His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer. His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel. The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity, with a sobriety even in its horrors, with the greatest precision

and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis differ from those of Gulliver. The author of Amadis would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift, the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, now actually resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands and philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him: And as this is a point on which many rash and ill considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery, is that of attempting to philosophize too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that their exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word; but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And, if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas, and a box of colours to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of mankind can never feel an interest in them. They must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and

nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is every reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore, produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of Gods and Goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the Sun the worship which, speculatively, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception: but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust! Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new Paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St George took the place of Mars. St Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity; and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings; but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in Cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show, that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be *embodied* before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations, we infer, that no poet, who should

affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical colouring can produce no illusion, when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary therefore for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary for him to clothe his spirits with material forms. 'But,' says he, 'he should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts.' This is easily said; but what if he could not seduce the reader to drop it from *his* thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the *quasi-belief* which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debateable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously, through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world, ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault indeed on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of his poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. His supernatural agents excite an interest; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk with his ghosts and demons, without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could,

like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. His angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Facinata is justly celebrated. Still Facinata in the burning tomb is exactly what Facinata would have been at an *auto da fe*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it, but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence, as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The Spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His Fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and demons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the vagueness and tenor of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. His legends seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticoes in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite, in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favourite gods are those of the elder generations—the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart,—the gigantic Titans and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of heaven. He bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters also are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Pro-

metheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture: he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermittent misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from any thing external, nor even from hope itself!

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add, that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncracies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame, who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced, by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, coloured by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of thought; that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the Divine Comedy we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth, nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It twined every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, 'a land of darkenss, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness!' The gloom of his character discolours all the passions of men and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the Eternal Throne! All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful

stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belonged to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman, and a lover—and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. That hateful proscription, facetiously termed the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, had set a mark on the poor, blind, deserted poet, and held him up by name to the hatred of a profligate court and an inconstant people! Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favourite writers of the Sovereign and the public. It was a loathsome herd—which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of Comus, grotesque monsters, half bestial half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these his Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the Masque, lofty, spotless, and serene—to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rabble of Satyrs and Goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, it might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was, when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be—when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die!

Hence it was, that, though he wrote the Paradise Lost at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a

finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental haram, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fire-side. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces indeed of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet; as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream, which, for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed for ever, led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces, remind us of the Greek Anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy—the noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would indeed be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer, from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high, and an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind; at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes—liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That

great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with a strange and unwonted fear!

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed and is less understood, than any event in English history. The Roundheads laboured under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly. Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, they had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming memoir of Mrs Hutchinson. May's History of the Parliament is good; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow is very foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause, Oldmixon for instance, and Catherine Macaulay, have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candour or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language, that of Clarendon, and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much, that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion—and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned, according as the resistance of the people to Charles I. shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue

it on general grounds; we shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced; it is a vantage-ground to which we are entitled; but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority, that we have no objection to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights, who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm, that every reason which can be urged in favour of the Revolution of 1688, may be urged with at least equal force in favour of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession,—because both Charles himself and his miserable creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices, a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a stupid and ferocious intolerance. This, however, we wave. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant; but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men, who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent, they pass by what is essential, and take only what is accidental: they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be any thing unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. They cannot always prevent the advocates of a good measure from compassing their end; but they feel, with their prototype, that

'Their labours must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil.'

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution, these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, se-

curity, toleration, all go for nothing with them. One sect there was, which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire there was, so unhappily circumstanced, that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom! These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them, not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America! they stand forth, zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right—which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland! Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era! The very same persons, who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St George's Channel, than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory. They may truly boast that they look not at men but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it—the arbitrary Charles or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic or Frederick the Protestant! On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion, that James II. was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant Revolution.

But this certainly was *not* the case. Nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's Abridgment, believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning. And, if we may believe them, their hostility was *primarily* not to Popery but to *Tyranny*. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic; but they excluded Catholics from the Crown, because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous Resolution, declared the throne vacant, was this, 'that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom.' Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688, must hold, that *the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the Sovereign*, justifies resist-

ance. The question then is this. Had Charles I. broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative, unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in *any* historian of *any* party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament, had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion, mention one act of James II. to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the Legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate. The right of petition was grossly violated. Arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments, were grievances of daily and hourly occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason: if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the King had consented to so many reforms, and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The Ship-money had been given up. The Star-Chamber had been abolished. Provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of Parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good, by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He too had offered to call a free Parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we praise our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the King. He had no doubt passed salutary laws. But what assurance had they that he would not break them?

He had renounced oppressive prerogatives. But where was the security that he would not resume them? They had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind, a man who made and broke promises with equal facility, a man whose honour had been a hundred times pawned—and never redeemed.

Here, indeed the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared, for wickedness and impudence, to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right. The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent, for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent. The subsidies are voted. But no sooner is the tyrant relieved, than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very Act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights, which were theirs by a double claim, by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase, infringed by the perfidious King who had recognised them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another Parliament: another chance was given them for liberty. Were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut?* Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their Prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would *trust* a tyrant or *conquer* him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James II. no private virtues? Was even Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tomb-stones in England claim for those who lie be-

neath them. A good father! A good husband!—Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation-oath—and we are told that he kept his marriage-vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates—and the defence is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them—and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, a good man but a bad king. We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations. And if, in that relation, we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table, and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him, which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has laboured, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. *He had renounced* the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious, that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them. But those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood, will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the Scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers revelling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of Cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy-men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag;—all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath the sceptres of Brandenburgh and Braganza. Many evils, no doubt, *were* produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the Devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge, that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a people. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that *a revolution was necessary*. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people: and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war. The rulers in the church and state reaped only that which they had sown. They had prohibited free discussion—they had done their best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If they suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been for some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are always sober. In climates where wine is a rarity, intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres. It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion; and after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice: they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendour and comfort is to found? If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house, or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear, at certain seasons, in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise, were for ever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war.* Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces—and that cure is *freedom!* When a prisoner first leaves his cell, he cannot bear the light of day:—he is unable to discriminate colours, or recognise faces. But the re-

* Orlando Furioso, Canto 43.

medy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to conflict, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learnt to swim! If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever.

Therefore it is that which we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of Public Liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blameable excesses of that time. The favourite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides. We have throughout abstained from appealing to first principles—we will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the Execution of the father and the Deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there, which applies to the former and not to the latter? The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister only ought to be responsible for the acts of the Sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffries and retain James? The person of a King is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a King is known to be posted, is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which

was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters! When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the fifth of November thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant King William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our King and Governor, can, on the thirtieth of January, contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We do not, we repeat, approve of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the King from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as 'a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a 'public enemy;' but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage: His heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father: They had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But, though we think the conduct of the regicides blameable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred; and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion: but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act, would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done, while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If any thing more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius would furnish it. That miserable perform-

ance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the '*Æneæ magni dextra*,' gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted, that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell—his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper, seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it, till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded indeed the first place in the commonwealth; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder, or an American President. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority—not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments. And he did not require that the Chief Magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time, and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his Parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which

was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then, it must be acknowledged, he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself, by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect, that at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well, no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it,—the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honour been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition, which stopped short of open rebellion, provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government, and the Humble Petition and Advice, were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But, had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second Protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. For his death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush—the days of servitude without loyalty, and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sunk into a Viceroy of France, and pocketed, with complacent infamy, her degrading insults, and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots, and the jests of buffoons, regulated the measures of a government which had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James—Belial and Moloch; and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race accursed of God and man was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton, apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And, for that purpose, it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise, that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. At a period of public commotion, every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of camp-followers, an useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with such fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose,—who kissed the hand of the King in 1640, and spit in his face in 1649,—who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn,—who dined on calves' head or on broiled rumps, and cut down oak-branches or stuck them up, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserved to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men perhaps which the world has ever produced. The

odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were as a body unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

'Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
Che mortali perigli in se contiene:
Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.' *

Those who roused the people to resistance,—who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years,—who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen,—who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy,—who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of free-masonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body, to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I., or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles II. was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets, which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix our choice on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar

* Gerusalemme Liberata, xv. 57.

character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an over-ruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognised no title to superiority but his favour; and, confident of that favour, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they felt assured that they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away! On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt: For they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged—on whose slightest action the Spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the Evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the

rocks had been rent, that the dead had arisen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God!

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker: But he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels, or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But, when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate, or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs, a coolness of judgment, and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors, and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world like Sir Artegale's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach: And we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices

of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity,—that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest and an useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which cooperated with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candour. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horseboys, gamblers and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favourable specimen. Thinking, as we do, that the cause of the King was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ, with the mutes who throng their antichambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valour, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or sel-

fish motive. Compassion and romantic honour, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and like the Red-Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought; but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues, courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Cavalier. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the Court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

'As ever in his great task-master's eye.'

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monoplized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honour and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best

with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Syrens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendour, the solemnity, and the romance, which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his Treatises on Prelacy, with the exquisite lines on Ecclesiastical architecture and music in the Penseroso, which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than any thing else, raises his character in our estimation; because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents; but his hand is firm. He does nought in hate, but all in honour. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendour still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for that species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against Ship-money and the Star-chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the king and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

' Oh, ye mistook! Ye should have snatched the wand!
Without the rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the lady that sits here,
Bound in strong fetters fixed and motionless.'

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupified people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians—for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. * With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system, in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand, and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses, than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile worship of eminent men, and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear when the outworks had been carried, and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapours, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He ridiculed the Eikon. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility,

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* Sonnet to Cromwell.

"Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi."

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages, compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the Paradise Lost has he ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."*

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the Areopagitica, and the nervous rhetoric of the Iconoclast, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the Treatise of Reformation, and the Animadversions on the Remonstrant. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart, and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the great poet. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction! We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word; the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it; the earnestness with which we should endeavour to

* The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy, Book II.

console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues; the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen *Boswellism*. But *there are* a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are refreshing to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by their superior bloom and sweetness, but by their miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the Great Poet and Patriot, without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he laboured for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

ART. III. *The Proposals for Founding an University in London considered.* By an OXONIAN. 8vo. London, 1825.

WE regard the event of a New University being founded, but more especially in the Capital of the British Empire,

as, in every point of view, among the most important to which these times, so fruitful in improvement, have given birth. Its influence upon the advancement of knowledge, and the progress of the species, would be very great, were it even to be established upon the same principles which have been adopted in the old collegiate institutions of England. It would at least be a vast addition to the means of literary and scientific education possessed by that country, and it would in some degree enable her to keep pace with the rapid progress of her population, in her public provisions for their instruction. The fact, that Oxford and Cambridge teach no more than from three to four thousand young men, out of at least two hundred times that number, of an age fit for instruction, is of itself quite sufficient to demonstrate the deplorable want of the higher branches of education among our Southern neighbours. The population of Scotland is not above a sixth part of that of England; and yet there are more students attending our Universities. Let us pause for a moment upon this fact, and endeavour to ascertain its causes.

The high antiquity in which the foundations of Oxford and Cambridge are lost, has given them hitherto a kind of prescriptive right to teach the wealthier classes of the community. The pretensions of Oxford especially, in this respect, are of a nature to impose upon the imagination. She traces her origin to the times of the ancient Britons; shows collegiate controversies between founders and fellows, as early as the days of Alfred; nay, has one college endowed by that famous prince, in the ninth century, and no less than seven before the end of Edward III.'s reign. She is allowed to have been, in M. Paris's time, the next university in the world, after that of Paris, and was one of the four ancient collegiate bodies erected into Universities by the Pope (now her bitter enemy),—Paris, Salamanca, and Bologna, being the other three. In monkish times, when the Church presented so large a field of exertion, and churchmen swarmed in every corner of the temporal as well as spiritual vineyard, the numbers attending at Oxford were great beyond any thing known in these degenerate days. No less than thirty thousand are said to have studied there in the reign of Henry III., if this be not a mistake or exaggeration, for it is certain that little more than three thousand frequented it in the time of King John, his father. Cambridge, though less ancient, has also existed for many centuries. Add to this high antiquity, the rich endowments, which, in the course of so many ages, those venerable seats of learning have received from the munificence of sovereigns, the piety of statesmen and priests, and

the bounty or vanity of less distinguished individuals; add likewise the many famous men who have there, in the lapse of a thousand years, learnt and taught,—and we shall at once perceive upon what a broad basis, and how deep a foundation, their influence over the minds of the community is placed. But they have also a more direct sway, in the exclusive power of giving degrees, the passports to much lucrative employment, and they enjoy the patronage of large revenues in fellowships and college livings, sufficient alone to attract candidates, if there were no other inducements to frequent those seats of education.

We must still advert to another particular, perhaps the most important of all. From their very commencement, these two bodies were closely allied to the Church, of which indeed they formed an integral portion. Within their walls, ecclesiastics have at all times ruled with undivided sway. Here, as in all other parts of Europe under the Romish hierarchy, the priests were from the first the only instructors of youth; because, indeed, they alone were at first capable of teaching; and here, as in most other countries, they have continued to retain the same exclusive power over education, long after they have ceased to be the sole possessors of the requisite learning, and have become indeed, in many respects, far less adapted than the laity to perform the office of instructors. The Universities have thus been regarded as the great depositaries of Ecclesiastical influence, and the great bulwarks of the Establishment. Every interference with them, on the part of the Laity, has been viewed with the most jealous eyes; and while no one but themselves, and their trusty and quasi-clerical allies, have been suffered by the priesthood to touch the government of their affairs, no other establishments have been deemed tolerable as places of liberal education: And thus it has become almost a part of the true English creed, that the Church is to superintend education, and that education means residence, for three or four years, at one or other of the two cities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The young patrician is first trained at one of the great schools, established in the like alliance with the Church, and under the management of the same clerical teachers; he is then handed over to a priest to prepare him for college; when ripe for college, he is received by many priests and quasi-priests, and tutored there, if not in much science, at least in deep reverence for the Mother Church, and in as great horror of the Pope as his ancestors were taught to entertain for the Reformation, in the same halls, supported by the same rents. When he leaves those sacred haunts, he is attended on the

Grand Tour by some chosen priest, fellow of a college, and expectant of a living, either from that college or from his pupil; and finally, he returns to take his place as a legislator, by hereditary right in one House, or by hereditary nomination in another, filled with unspeakable respect for every existing institution of his own country, and contempt of every foreign usage; convinced that no Papist can be saved, that no Dissenter can be a gentleman, that no Parson of the Church of England can do wrong, any more than if he were a king or his minister, that no body but a parson of the said church can teach his children, and that no place is fit and safe for them to be taught at, but Oxford or Cambridge, which have made himself what he is! Such, till very lately, was the established course of things in the upper classes of society; but this, like every thing else, has been fearfully shaken by the glorious events which have happened in both hemispheres since the American Revolution, and which are preparing, slowly indeed, but surely and safely, the emancipation of mankind from the thraldom of ignorance, prejudice, and intolerance.

It having become a settled opinion all over England, that education meant residence at Oxford or Cambridge; that private tuition meant having a clergyman at a good salary to board the pupil, or live with him in his father's house; and that foreign travel could only be performed in a fine carriage, with richly paid servants, and under the guidance of a well endowed priest, it soon became evident that such things were only for the wealthy of the land; that literary and scientific instruction could only be thought of by those who could afford to pay a sum equal to the maintenance of a whole family for each son; and, as for seeing foreign parts, that this refinement was only for those who, on their return, were to be engaged in the government of the country. The idea, accordingly, got to be prevalent, that, unless for the chance of college promotion, which the gratuities founded at the universities opened to persons in poor circumstances, no man could think of an university education for his son, who had not a fortune sufficient to give him an immediate income, as for the support of a separate establishment; and the natural consequence of this was, the entire neglect of the higher branches of education by all of inferior ways and means. Letters and science were confined to the universities; the universities were open only to the most wealthy; therefore, all the middle classes must let their sons grow up, with such learning as they could pick up at a grammar school; and, forthwith, plunge into business. It is true that the universities increased this impediment to education, by taking no pains to

keep down the expensive habits of their youth. But it is fair to state, that the chief cause of the expense, and the consequent exclusion, is to be found in the principle, that the universities alone could teach; and the kindred dogma, never stated indeed, but silently and implicitly taken for granted,—that the number of those privileged and most ancient bodies never could be increased!

In a word, the real cause of the scantiness of education was the fundamental axiom, the first principle of English education, that actual education means Oxford and Cambridge! For it follows from hence, that instead of instruction being brought home to a man's family, he must send his family away after it, to a distance of two or three hundred miles; that instead of his sons living under the same roof, and dining at one board with himself, he must provide other houses and other tables for them elsewhere; beside supplying the means of long journies, and exposing them to the risk of acquiring extravagant habits; and that, instead of superintending himself their morals and their studies, he must pay some professional person for taking them under his care. These supposed necessities occasion the bulk of the college expenses; and they are inseparably connected with the present system of collegiate education. Another necessary consequence of the principle is, that the supply of accommodation and instruction being of course limited at the two universities, and '*The Two Universities*' having the complete monopoly of liberal education, both charged more than they ought to have done for every thing, and were of necessity prevented from supplying more than a limited number, who would naturally be the wealthier classes; not to mention the certainty of their being indifferent as to the quality of the article they furnished, as well as averse, on every account, to furnish it of the newest fashion,—from whence arose the impossibility of obtaining the education of the place without much cost, and of obtaining the best education at any price.

These things, how obvious soever they may seem to be, excited for a long time but little attention. They had come to form part, as it were, of our national system, were interwoven with our daily habits, and passed like our other functions, unobserved. The consequences, however, were apparent enough; and not only did exclusion from liberal education incalculably injure the bulk of the community, but the want of competition, and the confinement of their tuition to the two classes, of Ecclesiastics and Patricians, equally injured the universities themselves. Their cares were devoted chiefly to educate men, who cared far less about science and let-

ters than those who were excluded would have done; and the rich endowments, joined to the certainty of having a constant supply of such wealthy pupils, made the teachers lazy, and their course of instruction superficial, and inflexibly opposed to all improvement.

Lord Bacon, accordingly, long ago observed, 'In the customs 'and institutions of schools, Universities, colleges, and the like 'conventions, destined for the seats of learned men and the promotion of knowledge, all things are found opposite to the advancement of the sciences: For the readings and exercises 'are here so managed, that it cannot easily come into one's 'mind to think of things out of the common road. Or if, here 'and there, one should venture to use a liberty of judging, he 'can only impose the task upon himself, without obtaining assistance from his fellows; and if he could dispense with this, 'he will still find his industry and resolution a great hinderance 'to his fortune. For the studies of men in such places are 'confined, and pinned down to the writings of certain authors; 'from which, if any man happens to differ, he is presently reprehended as a Disturber and Innovator. But there is surely 'a great difference between Arts and Civil affairs; for the danger is not the same from *new light*, as from *new commotions*. 'In civil affairs, a change even for the better is suspected, 'through fear of disturbance; because these affairs depend 'upon authority, consent, reputation, and opinion, and not 'upon demonstration; But arts and sciences should be like 'mines, resounding on all sides with new works, and further 'progress. And thus it ought to be according to right reason; but the case, in fact, is quite otherwise. For the abovementioned administration and policy of schools and Universities *generally opposes* and *greatly prevents* the improvement of 'the sciences.'

The excellence of a few individuals in each University, in classical and mathematical attainments, cannot be cited as any real exception to these remarks. The number of these proficients is extremely small, compared with that of the whole students; and there is really no medium between almost entire idleness, and such skill in making Greek and Latin verses as would astonish a first-rate German commentator, and such readiness in solving difficult problems as would surpass the belief—certainly far exceed the power of Sir Isaac Newton, were he again to visit the banks of the Granta. But the true test of a good and efficient system of instruction, is, first of all, its teaching the whole body of those whom it embraces, and making each advance according to

the measure of his faculties; and, next to that, its imparting knowledge which may remain with the students in after life. Tried by either test, the systems of our Universities lamentably fail. They have no classes, where hundreds daily resort to imbibe the learning of ancient, and the science of modern times; a few distinguish themselves, by useless expertness and nimbleness of display, rather than by gaining any very solid learning; the great body learn little or nothing, except, as one of their stoutest champions said, to drink an equal quantity of wine at both these venerable seats of the Muses; and few even of the College adepts at Greek prosody and the transcendental calculus, retain the most ordinary knowledge of either in after life. Certainly such skill, how astonishing soever, and how creditable both to the master and the pupil, would be well exchanged, as far as the whole Universities are concerned, for numerous and well attended lectures, imparting to hundreds a competent and accurate knowledge of the language, the manners, and the works of the ancients; with the laws of the moral and physical world, unfolded by the discoveries of later times.

Another consequence of the English principle, that liberal education is synonymous with Oxford and Cambridge, and with the great schools which are the preparatory seminaries for those places, has been the adoption of a plan by no means the best calculated either to secure the greatest regard to moral, or the most successful pursuit of intellectual improvement; we allude to the premature emancipation of youth from parental superintendance and control. It is not our design here to broach the much agitated question upon the merits of a public and private education; nor has our present purpose a necessary connexion with that controversy; because it is one thing to maintain that boys may safely, and even advantageously, be sent from home to school, and another to admit that young men, at the most critical period of life, when the passions are strongest, and the character only forming, should be launched forth into the world, nay, into a world peopled only by others as fiery and as inexperienced as themselves, only to be seen by their parents for a month or two, twice a year. We have, indeed, little hesitation in affirming, that the plan of keeping boys of sixteen, seventeen, and even eighteen, at public schools, is irrational and pernicious in the extreme, and a gross abuse of the better and sounder parts of a public school system, which should always end with fifteen. But we have the most entire persuasion, that the plan of sending young men of eighteen or nineteen to live together for the three most critical years of their lives, at a distance from their parents or guardians, subject to

no effectual or useful control, and suffered to drink, dice and wench as they please, to read what they please, and associate with whom they please, provided only they are punctual in attendance at chapel for five minutes in a morning, and regular in wearing the proper vestments, and showing themselves at the hour of grace before meat—is one of the most extravagant follies that ever entered into the minds of men, and would have been deemed too absurd a caricature of human improvidence, had it been only known in some page of Gulliver's Travels, and not grown silently into an English habit.

The Scotch plan of uniting domestic habits and parental superintendance with College study, seems to us incalculably better adapted to form both learned and good men, and is amply sufficient to account for the superiority of our youth in sober, prudent, and virtuous habits, as well as proficiency in their studies: For it is an undoubted fact, that though our Universities cannot produce examples of such rare expertness in verse-making and working analytical questions, as the Wranglers and Medallists afford every Christmas at Cambridge, yet, in a thousand young men attending the classes of Edinburgh or Glasgow, hardly fifty will be found who are not tolerably well versed in the branches of ornamental and useful knowledge taught by the learned professors of those venerable seminaries; though much may yet be done by them to improve their system of tuition, so as both to carry the abler of the students further, and to give them greater readiness, by adopting from the English Universities the better parts of their practice, the examinations, without carrying them to the same useless excess.

We need not, however, pursue this subject at present, further than to remark upon the extreme case in which the defects of the English system have at last become apparent, and in which, accordingly, the remedy has now been applied. If the absurdity was glaring, and the inconvenience great, of making the whole country tributary to the two Universities which happened to have been established, it was still worse with respect to the cities and the larger towns. Every place could not maintain a College: But towns of 80,000 or 100,000 inhabitants well might; and, above all, that the Capital, with a population of twelve hundred thousand, as many as the whole kingdom had in the days when Oxford and Cambridge flourished most, should be doomed to send thither for learning, instead of having it brought to its door, does seem so gross an absurdity, an inconvenience so intolerable, that no stretch of fancy can easily enable us to conceive how it has been so long submitted to. Consider the situation of an inhabitant of London in the middle station; a respectable

tradesman, or even a professional man of moderate income, as a surgeon, or an attorney, or a barrister of eight hundred or a thousand a year, with two sons, and an income depending on his life and health; or it may even be put as to a country gentleman, whose estate, of the same annual amount, is in strict settlement. A man in this situation must, beside paying his household expenses, and living in a certain degree of respectability, provide for his family by saving, or by paying for life insurance yearly. To furnish three or four hundred a year for his sons at the Universities, is out of the question; and yet 150*l*. each is indisputably below what such an education would cost him, if conducted on the most moderate scale of expenditure, including their journeys during the year. It is not reckoning too much, then, to say, that this would be 250*l*. a year added to the expense of having the same young men living with him at home. Besides, the vacations throw them back on his hands five months in the year, and, what is nominally paid for a course of twelve months' instruction, is really paid for seven. Again, if the young men are to follow a profession requiring an apprenticeship, the Universities are not to be thought of; for the years of apprenticeship coincide exactly with those of the University. Yet who can doubt that surgeons and attornies would be highly improved by the liberal education of a College? Rather is it not, if possible, more useful to them—to the former class at least—than to almost any other description of persons? And would not a judicious master in London most gladly permit, nay encourage, his apprentices to frequent College Lectures within their reach, sure that the little time so lost to his trade would be amply repaid by the increased diligence, sobriety, and knowledge thereby purchased?

In fact, so far from supposing that a country like England could have existed for any length of time with but two seats of learning, and neither of these in the metropolis, we might naturally have expected to find such institutions springing up wherever large masses of the people were collected, and at any rate that one should be found, if no where else, at least in the Capital, where so many thousands of students must always afford an effectual demand for instruction. Not only is that the place where the greatest number of pupils must ever be collected—pupils, the greater part of whom can seek for education no where else—but the chief city furnishes, in every country, peculiar facilities for providing the means of instruction. It is the resort of the most celebrated persons of every description, and, among others, of those most eminently excelling in the cultivation of the arts, the sciences, and letters. The greatest names in the history of each of these departments have always resided, for the most

part of their lives, in the metropolis. Even such as are addicted to no profession flock mostly to the capital. Compare London and Cambridge in this respect, and you will find the renowned philosophers, active resident members of the Royal Society, greatly outnumbering the men of note residing in the Colleges. With all the care bestowed on the stricter sciences in the latter place, when were there ever above one or two great mathematicians actually living there, while there may have been seven or eight in London? A single chemist, perchance a physiologist and a natural historian, and none of these very famous, may at a time fill the chair of one or two College foundations, while you are surrounded by the greatest names known to the age, as soon as you enter the Chambers of the Royal Society. But where the cares of a profession are compatible with scientific pursuits, and still more where eminence in science or in art can only be attained in conjunction with great practice in some profession, as in law, anatomy, medicine, and all the fine arts without exception, the Capital alone can ever furnish such professors: And thus it happens, that the teachers who reside at the Universities are almost invariably a very inferior class of men to those who live and practise in London; while, for want of an University there, the great department of teaching is severed from the reputation, the talents, and the experience which form the accomplished teacher.

It would be of itself a sufficient reason to found an University in London, that the greatest genius and skill would thus become available to the purposes of education in all the branches of knowledge. But there are some which can only be taught in a great city, and some best in the capital, some *only there*. Medicine in its principal branches, Nosology and Anatomy, can only be taught where there are large hospitals—best where the largest of these are established; and the fine arts can nowhere be taught except in the grand resort of artists, the great mart for their productions. The most bigoted Churchman can never get over this. He may cant out his panegyricks upon the antiquity of the old foundations—lose himself in rhapsodies upon the sacred haunts of the Muses on Isis and the Cam, and mutter his imprecations against all who profanely imagine other places of instruction: But he never can pretend to teach as much surgery as would enable him to have a broken head dressed, hardly medicine enough to cure himself of a surfeit, certainly not painting enough to exhibit his features better than the signs of Barnaby and Bishop Blaise represent them. For these branches of learning the Universities are, and ever must be, utterly useless; and to pretend teaching them in such places is the grossest imposition.

But, say the enemies of light, why should not those who cannot afford to send their sons to College, breed them up in the ignorance that suits their station, while medicine is taught as heretofore at the London Hospitals without any regular course of medical study? The answer to the first part of this plan has been furnished by the events of the day, and the rest is answered by the consequences of the same events. The mechanics and others in the humbler walks of life, having no faith in Oxford divines, and little respect for High Church prejudices, great thirst for knowledge, and not the least scruple about quenching it at the nearest and most convenient springs, have of late taken to read, and frequent lectures upon various branches of knowledge. Mechanics' Institutions have been founded, which are a kind of College for those most numerous, poorer, and valuable part of the community; and as they are every day and every hour improving themselves, it is now evident that they will in a very short time become greater proficients in science than ninety-nine in a hundred of the Doctors themselves at our antique Universities. In this awkward state of things, the worthy citizens and traders of London, and the gentlemen of moderate fortune, begin not to feel quite satisfied at having their work-people far more knowing than themselves and their children; and therefore they are disposed to look for the means of education nearer home than the Oxonian and the Cantabrigian professors are pleased to bring them. They have neither time nor money to spend upon regular courses of academical education; and they are determined to be instructed at their own homes.

To these predisposing and proximate causes of the important event which forms the subject of this Article, we must add one, no less signal in its nature and its operation. Founded by priestcraft, closely linked with its Professors in the earliest times, and always in the hands of the ruling powers of the Church, the Universities have in every age been most exclusively appropriated to the education and to the uses of the Establishment and its members. The most rigorous compliance with its doctrines has always been exacted; the strictest exclusion of all Dissenters from it has uniformly been practised. As long as Popery was the religion of the State, the Universities were rigidly Catholick; and indeed their endowments, in by far the greater part, proceeded from the bounty and piety of Romanists, and were given for the propagation of the Romish faith, and the inculcation of the Romish discipline. When the State threw off its allegiance to the Pope, and became Protestant, the Universities followed, and piously directed all the donations and bequests of their Catholic founders to the destruction

of the Catholic religion,—embracing the reformed faith, with the intolerance of their old profession, and transferring to Dissenters the hatred which they had formerly borne to the doctrine and discipline of the Protestants. But this hatred was very cordial, if not very consistent; and no participation in their endowments could ever be hoped for by any one who was not prepared to avow an implicit belief in all the dogmas of the Church, and testify it by an outward observance of her ritual every day, as well as by occasional declarations and signatures of a more solemn kind. Hence, even where a man was rich enough to pay the expenses of an University education, and careless enough of his children to send them unprotected among other young men as entirely left to themselves, still he could have no access to Oxford or to Cambridge, unless he happened to be a member of the Established Church, or cared so little about religion as to embrace any form of faith and worship for a secular purpose—the Universities making no difference between persons of their own religion, and persons of no religion at all, but only excluding conscientious believers, whose faith varied, by a slight shade, from their own. Now, the Dissenters form a very large, and a most wealthy, intelligent, and respectable class of the English nation; and they abound particularly in and near the metropolis. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, if they should at length feel impatient at having no Colleges to which their youth might resort for the blessings of a liberal education; the more especially as they have at all times approved themselves the zealous and successful friends of the diffusion of knowledge, holding now the same place which the reformers once did, in their mighty struggle against the bigotry, and usurpations, and intolerance of the Romish hierarchy.

From all these considerations, an observer of moderate sagacity might easily discover the indications of an University, upon an extensive scale, situated in the metropolis, suited to its wants, and accessible to the youth of all sects, as well as of the Established church. This, indeed, was but a corollary from the great principles so fully recognised of late years by the friends of popular education, who have founded schools for all, excluding none, and carefully avoiding, both *tests*, which might directly operate the exclusion of any, and such teaching or forms of discipline as might more indirectly produce the same effect. If it was clearly demonstrated that the elementary branches of education might easily be taught without at the same time teaching any particular creed; it was equally clear that the higher branches of letters might be taught without a creed; and if, in the one case, it was a sufficient answer to the clamour,

'Why leave the children without religious instruction?' to say 'We only profess to teach reading, writing and accounts, leaving the task of religious instruction with their parents and pastors,' it was an equally triumphant refutation in the other case of the like outcry, 'Why leave the young without religion?' to say 'We teach them science and letters, leaving them to learn religion under the spiritual guides of their fathers.' After so much had been done upon these rational, and truly religious and purely Christian, because entirely tolerant and charitable grounds, for the instruction of the poor, without any distinction of sects, the wonder is not, that fourteen years after the formation of the British and Foreign School Society, a similar principle should be adopted in the higher walks of literature, and the means of scientific education provided at a cheap rate for the middle and upper classes of the community, without any exclusion or preference on account of religion, but rather that so long an interval was allowed to elapse before a step so obvious, and yet so important, was taken. It has however at length been taken; and its effects will probably exceed all the present hopes of some, and surpass the fears of others. We hesitate not at all to avow, that we regard it as a new era in education; and that both the learning, the policy, the morals, and the rational religion of the community, will be incalculable gainers by it, in no very remote period of time. The monopoly of some, and the undue influence of others, may indeed be destroyed; but the community and the species will be rapidly and safely advanced in the great race of moral and intellectual improvement.

The first step taken, and most wisely taken, by the promoters of this measure, was to form an union of all the different interests which were concerned in its success; and accordingly those liberal Churchmen who desired to see an University founded on general grounds, readily joined with the various denominations of Dissenters, who, being excluded from the benefits of the ancient establishments, have no means of educating their youth except through a new foundation. As it was resolved to embrace all the branches of learning in the projected scheme, a great difficulty immediately arose as to Theology, and the kindred studies of Ecclesiastical History and Biblical Criticism. If, on the one hand, these were excluded, the course of study seemed to be imperfect, and in a very important branch; beside the certainty of cavil arising among the adversaries of improvement, who would not fail to urge the omission as an intentional slight put upon sacred literature,—perhaps to raise an outcry as if all religion was purposely excluded through indif-

ference or disrespect. If, on the other hand, they were admitted, how could various opinions be so far consulted as to find teachers whose doctrines every sect might receive? How could a Catholic and Protestant, or a Churchman and Dissenter, attend the same course of theological lectures, or listen to the same historical account of the councils, the Pope, the Reformation, the Puritans, and the Restoration? The reluctance to omit all Theological literature was however so great, that a compromise was at first propounded and nearly resolved upon. Three classes were to be taught—Theology by a member of the Church of England, Ecclesiastical History by a member of the Church of Scotland, and Biblical Criticism by a member of one of the Dissenting denominations. We mention this as a signal proof of the extraordinary indisposition to omit these important classes: For a very little consideration was sufficient, of course, to show the impracticability of any such arrangement, and to prove that Theology cannot possibly be taught except in one of two sorts of universities—either where all the students are of one religious persuasion, or where religious belief is a matter of perfect indifference to all. Now, as the new scheme was intended to comprehend every denomination of believers, and as a deep sense of the importance of religion, was the prevailing sentiment of its promoters, in so much indeed, that the exclusion of Dissenters from the old establishments, which was one moving cause of the New Institution, had only been effected by their own conscientious regard for their religious principles, it was quite plain that no system of Theological instruction could be adopted at all. The whole other sciences, however, might be taught; and it was clearly not because of the little value set upon the one excepted, but precisely because of its paramount importance over all human learning, which precluded alike both compromise and indifference, that this one was of necessity excluded.

If the omission of Theological studies, became a matter of necessity, arising out of the fundamental principles upon which the New Institution was to be founded, the exclusion of all forms of worship was still more manifestly required by the same rule. No mode of worship could be devised in which all sects could agree; and the consequence necessarily was, to exclude all religious discipline. This too was clearly dictated, not by any indifference to religion; on the contrary, it resulted immediately and directly from the assumption, that religion was a matter far too important to be compromised, like a common ceremony; and that the founders of the University were too much in earnest about it, to suffer the profanation which it undergoes

by being either made a test for purposes of secular interest, or an unmeaning form which men may go through, whatever be their opinions and feelings, exactly as they conform to the ordinary ceremonies of society.

As might be expected, their exclusion of religious instruction and observances has been made the subject-matter of clamour by persons who regard religion as valuable only in its subserviency to political and to personal interests. The cry has been 'What! an University without Religion! an University from which Religion is banished!' Nothing ever was more base in the authors of it, or, in those who have echoed the noise, more utterly unthinking. As to excluding Theology, whereby it was said the youth were to be trained up without religious instruction, which of the lay youth, we would ask, at Oxford or Cambridge, ever attends, or thinks of attending a single lecture on Divinity! The handful destined for the church, no doubt, go to such lectures on theological matters as are there delivered; and so of necessity must the clerical young men of the New University go to some lectures on the same subjects, wherever they are to be heard. But what young man of fortune, or what youth intended for the Army or the Bar, ever entered the door of a Divinity lecture-room in either University? In a thousand students then, it is plain, that exactly the same number will learn divinity at the London, the Oxford and the Cambridge Colleges. But there are other instructions of a religious nature, is is said, beside the mere lectures. Indeed! where be those other instructions? By whom are they conveyed? At what hours, in what form, do the ingenuous youth drink in the sacred lore? Can it be pretended that the subscription of the Articles communicates a knowledge of their dogmas? That subscription, on the contrary, supposes or ought to suppose such a knowledge to have been previously acquired. Will it be said that the attendance at chapel for a few minutes daily, effects the extrusion of the old man—the hearer half asleep, just risen from the bed he is just going to reoccupy, and the reader in such haste, that he has been known repeatedly to boast of being able to give any man distance as far as the Creed, and beat him?* We venture to assert, without the least fear of being contradicted, by the fact or the reason, that there is absolutely no religion taught and no attention to its observances inculcated, by the mere existence of Divinity Lectures, and the compliance with certain outward forms; and that, whatever is learnt or imbibed of this

* The bet was, 'I'll give any of you in to Pontius Pilate, and the 'odds, and beat him!' Our Universities reckon such things quite regular—and they abhor all *saints!*

sort at either University, is through the operation of private instruction; and consequently may be just as well learnt, and as fully imbibed by the students of the London University, under the tuition of their parents and spiritual instructors.

But suppose it were true, which it is not, that Oxford and Cambridge teach religion to the youth; is there no difference between young men sent away from home, and others kept carefully under your own roof? It may be very fit that, in receptacles for students, who live together, and are wholly cut off from domestic tuition, provision should be made for their religious education; and it may be a great defect in our old colleges to have so scanty a supply of such instruction. But surely no such occasion can exist in a mere day-school like the London University, which the young men attend as they would the Royal Institution, or Mr M'Culloch's Lectures, or a French class, or a special pleader, or an attorney, or a fencing-master, residing all the while at home, and *there* receiving religious as well as moral instruction from parents and their pastors. Did any man ever cry out against the orthodoxy of private teachers of the languages, or of the mathematicks, because they begin their lessons and close them daily without prayer? Did any man ever object to letting his son attend a special pleader all the week, because he did not walk his pupils to church on Sundays and saints days? Nay, who ever dreamt of taking alarm at the irreligion of the Inns of Court, where hundreds of young men live to study, and never see the face of the preacher, or are required to attend even once in a year at the performance of divine service? The triumphant answer to all such cavils is, 'We profess to teach the sciences and 'literature. With religion we meddle not; but leave each stu-'dent to learn it where he and his parents please, and from 'such persons, and in such a shape as suits them, and accords 'with their principles.'

It appears that this question, as to which the religious differences of the supporters of the plan offered so many impediments, being once settled in a manner generally satisfactory, and according with the soundest principles of universal toleration, no further difficulty was experienced; and the sketch of the proposed plan was submitted on the first of July last to a public meeting. This is said to have been one of the most numerous, possibly the most numerous, ever assembled in the city of London. The Lord Mayor presided; and was supported both by the most eminent promoters of the plan, and by the greatest names in the City for respectability and wealth. The proceedings were marked by the greatest unanimity and enthusiasm, and under these very favourable auspices this most important scheme has

been ushered into the world. We shall shortly sketch the outlines of it, as far as they are yet determined, as the details are of course left to be filled up by the subscribers to the fund at a general meeting.

We shall begin with the constitution of the proprietary body, or what may be termed the political, as contra distinguished from the literary portion of the plan. The funds required are to be raised by shares of 100*l.* each, and subscriptions or donations of 50*l.* The whole cost, on a very liberal estimate, has been calculated at 200,000*l.*, and it is proposed to have 3000 shares, so as not to call for more than 66 per cent. on each share, and leave the rest as a reserve for extension of the plan, or other unforseen contingencies. Each share is to have the privilege of sending one pupil to the University; and to receive also an interest not exceeding four per cent. Each shareholder is to have a vote at all general meetings, and in the election of the Directors, or Council of Management; and proxies are to be allowed. Each contributor of 50*l.* by way of gift, is to have all the privileges of a shareholder for life only, and inalienably; but is to receive no interest. The executive government is to be vested in a Council of twenty-one, composed of a Chancellor and Vice-chancellor, to be chosen, the former for life, the latter for two years, and nineteen Councillors, of whom four are to go out annually, and to be ineligible for one year after. This Council is to choose all the professors, to superintend them, and suspend and remove; in short, to exercise all the functions of visitors.

The whole circle of the sciences and of literature, except Theology, is to be taught by the various professors. These branches it is unecessary to enumerate. The professors are to be divided into two Colleges, one of Literature, and the other of Science and the Useful Arts; and each College is to have a Principal elected by the professors from their own body, and for life. Every thing relative to academical discipline is to be under the control of these learned persons. The salaries of the professors are to be very moderate, in order that their emoluments may depend upon their classes; the students all paying such fees as the Council shall fix; the salaries are also to be fixed by the Council. Beside the fees to the professors, the students are to pay five guineas yearly to the general fund, and one guinea to the library. Out of the general fund the interest to the shareholders is to be paid; and as this is not to exceed four pounds a share, and as each share will send one pupil, it is plain there can never be wanting an ample fund for paying the interest. The plan is to erect a spacious and hand-

some edifice in a central situation, with suitable walks, a library and reading room,—and so near one or more of the great hospitals as to secure the establishment of a medical school. For carrying this plan into execution, a committee, chiefly chosen among those present at the meeting, was named; and as they consist of men of all parties and of all sects, as well zealous Churchmen as leaders among the Dissenters, men eminently distinguished for their sound principles and their zeal in the cause of religion, the clamours attempted to be raised on account of the exclusion of tests, were very speedily silenced; the amplest security being afforded to the country, by those persons bearing a share in the foundation, that the interests of pure religion were consulted, while every thing like intolerance was avoided.

It is impossible to close these remarks without adverting to the conduct of the Government and the Parliament upon this important subject. Application was early made for a charter; to obtain a privilege convenient, though not necessary, and which has hardly ever been refused to literary and scientific associations in any part of the country. The Government however declined granting the request. A bill was then brought into the House of Commons for conferring the same privileges, that is, making the New Institution a corporate body; but though it would have passed the Lower House in spite of the Ministry, yet as they were resolved not to countenance it, the Lords would certainly have thrown it out, and the measure was therefore, to save expense and delay, prudently dropt. Yet mark the inconsistency of these men! They incorporate not only the Royal Institution, and the New Royal Society of Literature, the former a most inefficient substitute for a London University; the latter a silly scheme for amusing a few amateurs, and for pensioning literary men, generally according to principles hitherto unknown in this free country. Nay, in the very Session in which the charter is refused to the New University, a bill is passed, under the patronage of Government, by very large majorities, for establishing a West India Company, to serve speculators in negro property, and to increase beyond all calculation the chances of ill treatment to the slaves!—Perhaps we err in charging the authors—the wise, humane, liberal authors of such measures as the New Pensioned Society, and the Slave Holder Company—with *inconsistency* in refusing, as far as in them lies, to give the benefits of liberal education to the metropolis. Their motive, however, we do not after all believe to have been worse than timidity and folly. They dreaded the cry of the Church—or rather the High Church faction, and were not sure how the two old Univer-

sities might like the measure in agitation. Now, it is but fair towards these learned bodies to state, that they have shown no little-minded jealousy, either publicly or as individuals, upon the present occasion. Some of their most distinguished members, even Heads of Houses in each, are known to be highly favourable to the London University; and almost all, as far as we have heard, believe that their privileges will never be interfered with, or their importance lessened, by the success of the new plan. In fact, the overflow of students at both Oxford and Cambridge is well known; and were it not so, the monopoly of degrees, and the possession of fellowships and large church patronage, would always secure them a preference with one class of pupils, while their antiquity and aristocratic connexions must ensure them the favour of another. Besides, as the establishment of the new seminary is sure to promote the taste for liberal studies, it will make many families send their sons to college who can afford it now, but think not of it; and others, who will send their younger sons, engaged perhaps in trade or professions, to the London University, may probably send their eldest to the ancient and aristocratic haunts. The monopoly of universities will indeed be at an end; colleges will be formed in other parts of the country, in the North, in the West, and in some of the greater towns, as well as in the capital; but though the dominion of the High Church Party will be abridged, and active exertion in teaching promoted, and learning and all liberal accomplishments diffused, we will venture to predict that a greater number of students will actually attend, or apply for admission, at both Oxford and Cambridge, than now frequent these famous seats of letters.

It is gratifying meanwhile to learn that the subscription for the shares fills so steadily as to leave little room for doubting that the requisite sums will be raised. Indeed we have understood that already (and we write at the end of July) a sufficient sum is subscribed to make the attempt quite practicable, though upon a less magnificent scale of building, than the plan originally contemplated. The demand for shares, however, continues, and we sincerely hope will go on until the whole are taken; because so great a national work ought to be splendidly begun, and the larger the funds are, the managers will possess the greater power of obtaining the most celebrated men as professors, from the very beginning.

That men of liberal principles, and wellwishers to education, should press on for shares, with the mere view of promoting the success of the plan, is not wonderful, and is most to be desired; but another class is also very likely to interfere, and to this the attention of the managing Committee should be direct-

ed. The certainty of the shares bearing a large premium, and at no distant period, is pretty clear; for even if the whole 100*l.* on each were required, it would still yield four per cent., and the owner, being enabled to sell it, as well as bequeath, would also be able to convey with it the privilege of sending a son or nephew to the University, to say nothing of the right of voting at elections. If, on the other hand, more than the number of shares wanted are subscribed for, and less than the 100*l.* a share is called for, the interest will be higher than four per cent. on the money actually advanced. Now, far less benefit than this plan affords, has been found quite sufficient to attract far larger sums than the greatest required by the plan. It may be observed too, that the security for the interest keeps exact pace with the subscriptions, inasmuch as each share will certainly be employed in procuring admittance for some pupil who will pay the sum, and above a fourth part more, required to defray the interest on that share. If pupils should afterwards be admitted without shares to qualify them, of course they will pay more than the five guineas, and thus still farther increase the same general fund. The temptations thus held out, may therefore be expected to attract mere speculators; and it will behove the managers to prevent too large a proportion of these from obtaining a footing. They are understood to have distributed a large number among trustworthy persons in London and different parts of the country; and we earnestly expect all the friends of this admirable plan, and the principles of enlightened toleration on which it is founded, to press forward and unite themselves to the managers, by taking shares, whereby they will, wheresoever they reside, obtain a voice in the elections.

We have heard various objections urged to the use of the word *University* by the new establishment. It seems this is regarded as an assumption of dignity, and some even say of authority; as if a body took or could take upon itself to do any thing beyond its legal powers, by merely assuming a name of known import. A notion has been ventilated that the Crown alone has the right of creating an University—which, if stated of a body having the privileges enjoyed by the present Universities, is notoriously untrue, since the Crown could do little more than incorporate them; however, they have been incorporated time out of mind, and one of them made an University by the Pope. But it is remarkable enough, that in times when such points of trifling disceptation occupied men's wits far more than they are now suffered to do, the claims of London to the name and style of an University, was demonstrated even at that day. In the year

1615, a tract was published with this title, 'The Third University of England, or a Treatise of the foundations of all the 'Colledges, auncient Schooles, &c., within and about the famous cittie of London.' It is dedicated to "The Right 'Honourable and the most Reverend and most Learned Judge, 'Sir Edward Coke, Knight, Lord Chief Justice of England, of 'pleas before the King himselfe to be holden, and one of his 'Maister's Privie Councell.' The argument of the work (which from the above technical description of Lord Coke's office, Chief Justice of B. R. seems to come from a lawyer,) is to support the proposition that London is an University; and it is thus stated by the learned author.

'Having observed in diuers writers, as well forayne as English, the cittie of London to be stiled an Universitie, and doubting of it, I tooke occasion thereby to examine uppon what grounds and causes they had so stiled it; and after some search and consideration therof, I found sufficient cause and reasons to satifie me: For I saw that not onely those Arts, which are called liberall, but also all or the most part of all other Arts and Sciences proper and fit for ingenuous and liberall persons, were and are in this cittie professed, taught and studied: which is (adding but cum priuilegio) as much as can be sayd, for the name and authoritie of anie Universitie, and which can be rightly sayd of very fewe other Universities of Christendome. For in the Cittie of London be read and taught the Arts of Grammar, of Rhetorike, of Arithmetike, of Musicke, of Geometry, of Astronomy, of Geographie, of Hidrographie: Likewise the other Mathematicall learnings, and Philosophie, Phisicke, and Metaphisicke, the lawes Ecclesiasticall, Muncipall, and Ciuill. As also the Arts of Riding, Gladiatorie, Alchimy, Optica, Memoratica, Geodesie, Poetrie, Heraldrie, Graphice, Characterie, Brachigraphie, and diuers Languages, holy, learned, and strange, and many other free and subtill arts, and sciences are professed, taught, studied, and practised within this cittie, as shall more plainely appeare in the processe of this Treatise. And (that which is most chiefly of all to be observed) the chiefest science, the Science of Sciences, and the key of all knowledge (to wit) the Science and Art of serving of Almightie God (called Theologie and Divinitie) is no where better nor more plentifully taught then in this Cittie; many and dayly lectures being read thereof, not onely in the chiefe and Cathedral Churches of S. Paul, and Saynt Peter, but also in all the parish Churches and Temples: and particularly and academically also in Gresham Colledge. So that these places are nothing els but Schooles of Theologie, and Colledges of Diuines. Then consequently it followeth (if Academia & Studium & Vniversitas, according to their vses in seuerall ages, be but Sinonyma & æquiuoca (as the learned know) and that this last name Vniversitas, hath beene lately giuen and appropriated to generall Schooles of learning for and in respect of the Universalitie of Arts, Sciences, and Faculties professed, taught,

and studied in them, Et pro ipsa studiosorum Societate (as our most learned Countriman hath intimated in his immortall Britania) and that an University or Academie be but Cætus hominum exercentium studia literarum, & in ijs se occupantium (as Francis Junius defineth it.) Then I say, it followeth consequently yt London may not onely challenge iustly the name and stile of an Universitie, but also a chiefe place in the Catalogue of Vniversities.

The following is the conclusion of the Tractate.

'To conclude then briefly uppon the Allegata, and Probata premised. It appeareth herby to be cleere that vnto London belongeth not onely the stile, and title of Vniversitie; but also of a chiefe and principall vniversitie, hauing no complement thereof wanting but one; and that is the gouernment and protection of an honourable chauncellor, which the King my Master may easily at his Maiesties pleasure supply, hauing good choyse of most grave and noble personages, fit for this charge, when it shall please his Maiesty."

We trust that the scruples of the tender consciences to which we have referred, will be removed by these sagacious proofs, which seem to have satisfied the doubts, even of the seventeenth century.

Art. IV.—*The Book of Fallacies: from Unfinished Papers of Jeremy Bentham.* By A Friend. London, J. & H. L. Hunt. 1824.

There are a vast number of absurd and mischievous fallacies, which pass readily in the world for sense and virtue, while in truth they tend only to fortify error and encourage crime. Mr Bentham has enumerated the most conspicuous of these in the book before us.

Whether it is necessary there should be a middleman between the cultivator and possessor, learned economists have doubted; But neither Gods, men nor booksellers can doubt the necessity of a middleman between Mr Bentham and the public. Mr Bentham is long; Mr Bentham is occasionally involved and obscure; Mr Bentham invents new and alarming expressions; Mr Bentham loves division and subdivision—and he loves method itself, more than its consequences. Those only therefore who know his originality, his knowledge, his vigour, and his boldness, will recur to the works themselves. The great mass of readers will not purchase improvement at so dear a rate; but will choose rather to become acquainted with Mr Bentham through the medium of Reviews—after that eminent philosopher has been washed, trimmed, shaved, and forced into clean

linen. One great use of a Review, indeed, is to make men wise in ten pages who have no appetite for an hundred pages; to condense nourishment, to work with pulp and essence, and to guard the stomach from idle burthen and unmeaning bulk. For half a page, sometimes for a whole page, Mr Bentham writes with a power which few can equal; and by selecting and omitting, an admirable style may be formed from the text. Using this liberty, we shall endeavour to give an account of Mr Bentham's doctrines, for the most part in his own words. Wherever any expression is particularly happy, let it be considered to be Mr Bentham's:—the dulness we take to ourselves.

Our Wise Ancestors—the Wisdom of our Ancestors—the Wisdom of Ages—venerable Antiquity—Wisdom of Old Times.—This mischievous and absurd fallacy springs from the grossest perversion of the meaning of words. Experience is certainly the mother of wisdom, and the old have, of course, a greater experience than the young; but the question is, who are the old? and who are the young? Of *individuals* living at the same period, the oldest has, of course, the greatest experience; but among *generations* of men the reverse of this is true. Those who come first (our ancestors), are the young people, and have the least experience. We have added to their experience the experience of many centuries; and, therefore as far as experience goes, are wiser, and more capable of forming an opinion, than they were. The real feeling should be, *not,* can we be so presumptuous as to put our opinions in opposition to those of our ancestors? but, can such young, ignorant, inexperienced persons as our ancestors necessarily were, be expected to have understood a subject as well as those who have seen so much more, lived so much longer, and enjoyed the experience of so many more centuries? All this cant then about our ancestors is merely an abuse of words, by transferring phrases true of cotemporary men to succeeding ages. Whereas (as we have before observed) of living men the oldest has, *cæteris paribus,* the most experience; of generations, the oldest has, *cæteris paribus,* the least experience. Our ancestors, up to the Conquest, were children in arms; chubby boys in the time of Edward the First; striplings under Elizabeth; men in the reign of Queen Anne; and *we* only, are the white-bearded, silver-headed ancients,—who have treasured up, and are prepared to profit by, all the experience which human life can supply. We are not disputing with our ancestors the palm of talent, in which they may or may not be our superiors, but the palm of experience, in which it is utterly impossible they can be our superiors. And yet

whenever the Chancellor comes forward to protect some abuse, or to oppose some plan which has the increase of human happiness for its object, his first appeal is always to the wisdom of our ancestors; and he himself, and many noble Lords who vote with him, are, to this hour, persuaded that all alterations and amendments on their devices are an unblushing controversy between youthful temerity and mature experience!—and so, in truth, they are—only that much loved magistrate mistakes the young for the old, and the old for the young—and is guilty of that very sin against experience which he attributes to the lovers of innovation.

We cannot of course be supposed to maintain that our ancestors wanted wisdom, or that they were necessarily mistaken in their institutions, because their means of information were more limited than ours. But we do confidently maintain that when we find it expedient to change any thing which our ancestors have enacted, we are the experienced persons, and not they. The quantity of talent is always varying in any great nation. To say that we are more or less able than our ancestors, is an assertion that requires to be explained. All the able men of all ages, who have ever lived in England, probably possessed, if taken all together, more intellect than all the able men now in England can boast of. But if authority must be resorted to rather than reason, the question is, What was the wisdom of that single age which enacted the law, compared with the wisdom of the age which proposes to alter it? What are the eminent men of one and the other period? If you say that our ancestors were wiser than us, mention your date and year. If the splendour of names is equal, are the circumstances the same? If the circumstances are the same, we have a superiority of experience, of which the difference between the two periods is the measure. It is necessary to insist upon this; for upon sacks of wool, and on benches forensic, sit grave men, and agricolous persons in the Commons, crying out 'Ancestors, Ancestors! *hodie non!* Saxons, Danes, save us! Fiddlefrig, help us! Howel, Ethelwolf, protect us.'—Any cover for nonsense—any veil for trash—any pretext for repelling the innovations of conscience and of duty!

'So long as they keep to vague generalities,—so long as the two objects of comparison are each of them taken in the lump—wise ancestors in one lump, ignorant and foolish mob of modern times in the other,—the weakness of the fallacy may escape detection. But let them assign for the period of superior wisdom any determinate period whatsoever, not only will the groundlessness of the notion be apparent (class being compared with class in that period and the present one), but, unless the antecedent period be comparatively speaking

a very modern one, so wide will be the disparity, and to such an amount in favour of modern times, that, in comparison of the lowest class of the people in modern times (always supposing them proficients in the art of reading, and their proficiency employed in the reading of newspapers), the very highest and best informed class of these wise ancestors will turn out to be grossly ignorant.

'Take for example any year in the reign of Henry the Eighth, from 1509 to 1546. At that time the House of Lords would probably have been in possession of by far the larger proportion of what little instruction the age afforded: in the House of Lords, among the laity, it might even then be a question whether without exception their lordships were all of them able so much as to read. But even supposing them all in the fullest possession of that useful art, political science being the science in question, what instruction on the subject could they meet with at that time of day?

'On no one branch of legislation was any book extant from which, with regard to the circumstances of the then present times, any useful instruction could be derived: distributive law, penal law, international law, political economy, so far from existing as sciences, had scarcely obtained a name: in all those departments, under the head of *quid faciendum,* a mere blank: the whole literature of the age consisted of a meagre chronicle or two, containing short memorandums of the usual occurrences of war and peace, battles, sieges, executions, revels, deaths, births, processions, ceremonies, and other external events; but with scarce a speech or an incident that could enter into the composition of any such work as a history of the human mind,—with scarce an attempt at investigation into causes, characters, or the state of the people at large. Even when at last, little by little, a scrap or two of political instruction came to be obtainable, the proportion of error and mischievous doctrine mixed up with it was so great, that whether a blank unfilled might not have been less prejudicial than a blank thus filled, may reasonably be matter of doubt.

'If we come down to the reign of James the First, we shall find that Solomon of his time, eminently eloquent as well as learned, not only among crowned but among uncrowned heads, marking out for prohibition and punishment the practices of devils and witches, and without any the slightest objection on the part of the great characters of that day in their high situations, consigning men to death and torment for the misfortune of not being so well acquainted as he was with the composition of the Godhead.

'Under the name of Exorcism the Catholic liturgy contains a form of procedure for driving out devils:—even with the help of this instrument, the operation cannot be performed with the desired success but by an operator qualified by holy orders for the working of this as well as so many other wonders. In our days and in our country the same object is attained, and beyond comparison more effectually, by so cheap an instrument as a common newspaper: before

this talisman, not only devils but ghosts, vampires, witches, and all their kindred tribes, are driven out of the land, never to return again! The Touch of holy water is not so intolerable to them as the bare smell of printers' ink.' pp. 74—77.

Fallacy of irrevocable Laws.—A law, says Mr Bentham (no matter to what effect), is proposed to a legislative assembly, who are called upon to reject it, upon the single ground, that by those who in some former period exercised the same power, a regulation was made, having for its object to preclude for ever, or to the end of an unexpired period, all succeeding legislators from enacting a law to any such effect as that now proposed.

Now it appears quite evident that, at every period of time, every Legislature must be endowed with all those powers which the exigency of the times may require; and any attempt to infringe on this power is inadmissible and absurd. The sovereign power, at any one period, can only form a blind guess at the measures which my be necessary for any future period: But by this principle of immutable laws, the government is transferred from those who are necessarily the best judges of what they want, to others who can know little or nothing about the matter. The thirteenth century decides for the fourteenth. The fourteenth makes laws for the fifteenth. The fifteenth hermetically seals up the sixteenth, which tyrannizes over the seventeenth, which again tells the eighteenth how it is to act, under circumstances which cannot be foreseen, and how it is to conduct itself in exigences which no human wit can anticipate.

'Men who have a century more of experience to ground their judgments on, surrender their intellect to men who had a century less experience, and who, unless that deficiency constitutes a claim, have no claim to preference. If the prior generation were, in respect of intellectual qualification, ever so much superior to the subsequent generation,—if it understood so much better than the subsequent generation itself the interest of that subsequent generation,—could it have been in an equal degree anxious to promote that interest, and consequently equally attentive to those facts with which, though in order to form a judgment it ought to have been, it is impossible that it should have been acquainted? In a word, will its love for that subsequent generation be quite so great as that same generation's love for itself?

'Not even here, after a moment's deliberate reflection, will the assertion be in the affirmative. And yet it is their prodigious anxiety for the welfare of their posterity that produces the propensity of these sages to tie up the hands of this same posterity for evermore,—to act as guardians to its perpetual and incurable weakness, and take its conduct for ever out of its own hands.

'If it be right that the conduct of the 19th century should be determined not by its own judgment but by that of the 18th, it will be

equally right that the conduct of the 20th century should be determined, not by its own judgment but by that of the 19th. And if the same principle were still pursued, what at length would be the consequence?—that in process of time the practice of legislation would be at an end. The conduct and fate of all men would be determined by those who neither knew nor cared any thing about the matter; and the aggregate body of the Living would remain for ever in subjection to an inexorable tyranny, exercised as it were, by the aggregate body of the Dead.' pp. 84–86.

The despotism, as Mr Bentham well observes, of Nero or Caligula, would be more tolerable than an *irrevocable law.* The despot, through fear or favour, or in a lucid interval, might relent; but how are the Parliament, who made the Scotch Union, for example, to be awakened from that dust in which they repose—the jobber and the patriot, the speaker and the doorkeeper, the silent voters, and the men of rich allusions—Cannings and cultivators, Barings and beggars,—making irrevocable laws for men who toss their remains about with spades, and use the relics of these legislators, to give breadth to brocoli, and to aid the vernal eruption of asparagus?

If the law is good, it will support itself; if bad, it should not be supported by the *irrevocable theory,* which is never resorted to but as the veil of abuses. All living men must possess the supreme power over their own happiness at every particular period. To suppose that there is any thing which a whole nation cannot do, which they deem to be essential to their happiness, and that they cannot do it, because *another* generation long ago dead and gone, said it must not be done, is mere nonsense. While you are captain of the vessel, do what you please: But the moment you quit the ship, I become as omnipotent as you. You may leave me as much *advice* as you please, but you cannot leave me *commands;* though, in fact, this is the only meaning which can be applied to what are called irrevocable laws. It appeared to the legislature for the time being to be of immense importance to make such and such a law.—Great good was gained, or great evil avoided by enacting it.—Pause before you alter an institution which has been deemed to be of so much importance. This is prudence and common sense; the rest is the exaggeration of fools, or the artifice of knaves, who eat up fools. What endless nonsense has been talked of our navigation laws! What wealth has been sacrificed to either before they were repealed! How impossible it appeared to Noodledom to repeal them. They were considered of the irrevocable class,—a kind of law over which the dead only were omnipotent, and the living had no power. Frost, it is true, cannot be put off by act of Parliament, nor can Spring be accelerated by any

majority of both Houses. It is however quite a mistake to suppose that any alteration of any of the Articles of Union is as much out of the jurisdiction of parliament, as these meteorological changes. In every year, and every day of that year, living men have a right to make their own laws, and manage their own affairs: to break through the tyranny of the ante-spirants—the people who breathed before them, and to do what they please for themselves. Such supreme power cannot indeed be well exercised by the people at large; it must be exercised therefore by the delegates, or parliament whom the people choose; and such parliament, disregarding the superstitious reverence for *irrevocable laws,* can have no other criterion of wrong and right than that of public utility.

When a law is considered as immutable, and the immutable law happens at the same time to be too foolish and mischievous to be endured, instead of being repealed, it is clandestinely evaded, or openly violated; and thus the authority of all law is weakened.

Where a nation has been ancestorially bound by foolish and improvident treaties, ample notice must be given of their termination. Where the state has made ill-advised grants, or rash bargains with individuals, it is necessary to grant proper compensation. The most difficult case, certainly, is that of the union of nations, where a smaller number of the weaker nation is admitted into the larger senate of the greater nation, and will be overpowered if the question comes to a vote: But the lesser nation must run this risque: It is not probable that any violation of articles will take place, till they are absolutely called for by extreme necessity. But let the danger be what it may, no danger is so great, no supposition so foolish as to consider any human law as irrevocable. The shifting attitude of human affairs would often render such a condition an intolerable evil to all parties. The absurd jealousy of our countrymen at the Union, secured heritable jurisdiction to the owners; nine and thirty years afterwards they were abolished, in the very teeth of the Act of Union, and to the evident promotion of the public good.

Continuity of a Law by Oath.—The Sovereign of England at his Coronation, takes an oath to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel and the protestant religion as established by law, and to preserve to the Bishops and Clergy of this realm the rights and privileges which by law appertain to them, and to preserve inviolate the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of the Church. It has been suggested that by this oath the King stands precluded from granting those indulgences to the Irish Catholics, which are included in the bill

for their emancipation. The true meaning of these provisions is of course to be decided, if doubtful, by the same legislative authority which enacted them. But a different notion it seems is now afloat. The King for the time being (we are putting an imaginary case) thinks as an individual, that he is not maintaining the doctrine, discipline, and rights of the Church of England, if he grants any extension of civil rights to those who are not members of that Church, that he is violating his oath by so doing. This oath then, according to this reasoning is the great palladium of the Church. As long as it remains inviolate the Church is safe. How then can any monarch who has taken it ever consent to repeal it? How can he consistently with his oath for the preservation of the privileges of the Church, contribute his part to throw down so strong a bulwark as he deems this oath to be? The oath then cannot be altered. It must remain under all circumstances of society the same. The King, who has taken it, is bound to continue it, and to refuse his sanction to any bill for its future alteration; because it prevents him, and, he must needs think, will prevent others from granting dangerous immunities to the enemies of the Church.

Here then is an irrevocable law,—a piece of absurd tyranny exercised by the rulers of Queen Anne's time upon the government of 1825—a certain art of potting and preserving a kingdom, in one shape, attitude, and flavour—and in this way it is that an institution appears like old Ladies' Sweetmeats and made Wines—Apricot Jam 1822—Currant Wine 1819—Court of Chancery 1427—Penal Laws against Catholics 1676. The difference is, that the Ancient Woman is a better judge of mouldy commodities than the illiberal part of his Majesty's Ministers. The potting lady goes sniffing about and admitting light and air to prevent the progress of decay: while to him of the Wool Sack—all seems doubly dear in proportion as it is antiquated, worthless, and unusable. It ought not to be in the power of the Sovereign to tie up his own hands, much less the hands of his successors. If the Sovereign is to oppose his own opinion to that of the two other branches of the legislature, and himself to decide what he considers to be for the benefit of the Protestant Church, and what not, a king who has spent his whole life in the frivolous occupation of a court, may, by perversion of understanding, conceive measures most salutary to the Church to be most pernicious; and persevering obstinately in his own error, may frustrate the wisdom of his parliament, and perpetuate the most inconceivable folly! If Henry VIII. had argued in this manner, we should have had no reformation. If George III. had always argued in this manner, the Catholic

Code would never have been relaxed. And thus, a king, however incapable of forming an opinion upon serious subjects, has nothing to do but to pronounce the word *Conscience*, and the whole power of the country is at his feet.

Can there be greater absurdity than to say that a man is acting contrary to his conscience who surrenders his opinion upon any subject to those who must understand the subject better than himself? I think my ward has a claim to the estate; but the best lawyers tell me he has none. I think my son capable of undergoing the fatigues of a military life; but the best physicians say he is much too weak. My Parliament say this measure will do the Church no harm; but I think it very pernicious to the Church. Am I acting contrary to my conscience because I apply much higher intellectual powers than my own, to the investigation and protection of these high interests?

'According to the form in which it is conceived, any such engagement is in effect either a check or a license:—a license under the appearance of a check, and for that very reason but the more efficiently operative.

'Chains to the man in power? Yes:—but only such as he figures with on the stage: to the spectators as imposing, to himself as light as possible. Modelled by the wearer to suit his own purposes, they serve to rattle, but not to restrain.

'Suppose a King of Great Britain and Ireland to have expressed his fixed determination, in the event of any proposed law being tendered to him for his assent, to refuse such assent, and this not on the persuasion that the law would not be "for the utility of the subjects," but that by his coronation oath he stands precluded from so doing:—the course proper to be taken by parliament, the course pointed out by principle and precedent would be, a vote of abdication:—a vote declaring the king to have abdicated his royal authority, and that, as in case of death or incurable mental derangement, now is the time for the person next in succession to take his place.

'In the celebrated case in which a vote to this effect was actually passed, the declaration of abdication was in lawyers' language a fiction,—in plain truth a falsehood,—and that falsehood a mockery; not a particle of his power was it the wish of James to abdicate, to part with; but to increase it to a maximum was the manifest object of all his efforts. But in the case here supposed, with respect to a part, and that a principal part of the royal authority, the will and purpose to abdicate is actually declared: and this, being such a part, without which the remainder cannot, "to the utility of the subjects," be exercised, the remainder must of necessity be, on their part and for their sake, added.' pp. 110-111.

Self-trumpeter's Fallacy.—Mr Bentham explains the self-trumpeter's fallacy as follows.

'There are certain men in office who, in discharge of their func-

tions, arrogate to themselves a degree of probity, which is to exclude all imputations and all inquiry. Their assertions are to be deemed equivalent to proof; their virtues are guarantees for the faithful discharge of their duties; and the most implicit confidence is to be reposed in them on all occasions. If you expose any abuse, propose any reform, call for securities, inquiry, or measures to promote publicity, they set up a cry of surprise, amounting almost to indignation, as if their integrity were questioned, or their honour wounded. With all this, they dexterously mix up intimations, that the most exalted patriotism, honour, and perhaps religion, are the only sources of all their actions.' p. 120.

Of course every man will try what he can effect by these means; but (as Mr Bentham observes) if there be any one maxim in politics more certain than another, it is that no possible degree of virtue in the governor can render it expedient for the governed to dispense with good laws and good institutions. Madame de Stael (to her disgrace) said to the Emperor of Russia, 'Sire, your character is a constitution for your country, and your conscience its guarantee.' His reply was, 'Quand cela serait, je ne serais jamais qu'un accident heureux;' and this we think one of the truest and most brillant replies ever made by monarch.

Laudatory Personalities.—'The object of laudatory personalities is to effect the rejection of a measure on account of the alleged good character of those who oppose it; and the argument advanced is, "The measure is rendered unnecessary by the virtues of those who are in power,—their opposition is a sufficient authority for the rejection of the measure. The measure proposed implies a distrust of the members of His Majesty's Government—But so great is their integrity, so complete their disinterestedness, so uniformly do they prefer the public advantage to their own, that such a measure is altogether unnecessary. Their disapproval is sufficient to warrant an opposition; precautions can only be requisite where danger is apprehended; here, the high character of the individuals in question is a sufficient guarantee against any ground of alarm." pp. 123–124.'

The panegyric goes on increasing with the dignity of the lauded person. All are honourable and delightful men. The person who opens the door of the office is a person of approved fidelity; the junior clerk is a model of assiduity; all the clerks are models—seven years' models, eight years' models, nine years' models and upwards. The first clerk is a paragon—and ministers the very perfection of probity and intelligence; and as for the highest magistrate of the state, no adulation is equal to describe the extent of his various merits! It is too condescending perhaps to refute such folly as this. But we would just observe that if the propriety of the measure in question be established by

direct arguments, these must be at least as conclusive against the character of those who oppose it, as their character can be against the measure.

The effect of such an argument is, to give men of good or reputed good character, the power of putting a negative on any question—not agreeable to their inclinations.

'In every public trust, the legislator should, for the purpose of prevention, suppose the trustee disposed to break the trust in every imaginable way in which it would be possible for him to reap, from the breach of it, any personal advantage. This is the principle on which public institutions ought to be formed; and when it is applied to all men indiscriminately, it is injurious to none. The practical inference is, to oppose to such possible (and what will always be probable) breaches of trust every bar that can be opposed, consistently with the power requisite for the efficient and due discharge of the trust. Indeed, these arguments, drawn from the supposed virtues of men in power, are opposed to the first principles on which all laws proceed.

'Such allegations of individual virtue are never supported by specific proof, are scarce ever susceptible of specific disproof; and specific disproof, if offered, could not be admitted in either House of Parliament. If attempted elsewhere, the punishment would fall, not on the unworthy trustee, but on him by whom the unworthiness had been proved.' pp. 125, 126.

Fallacies of Pretended Danger.—Imputation of bad design—of bad character—of bad motives—of inconsistency—of suspicious connexions.

The object of this class of fallacies is to draw aside attention from the measure to the man, and this in such a manner, that, for some real or supposed defect in the author of the measure, a corresponding defect shall be imputed to the measure itself. Thus 'the author of the measure entertains a bad design; therefore 'the measure is bad. His character is bad; therefore the measure 'is bad, his motive is bad, I will vote against the measure. 'On former occasions, this same person who proposed the mea-'sure was its enemy, therefore the measure is bad. He is on a 'footing of intimacy with this or that dangerous man, or has 'been seen in his company, or is suspected of entertaining some of 'his opinions, therefore the measure is bad. He bears a name 'that at a former period was born by a set of men now no 'more, by whom bad principles were entertained—therefore the 'measure is bad!'

Now, if the measure be really inexpedient, why not at once show it to be so? If the measure is good, is it bad because a bad man is its author? If bad, is it good because a good man has produced it? What are these arguments, but to say to the as-

sembly who are to be the judges of any measure, that their imbecility is too great to allow them to judge of the measure by its own merits, and that they must have recourse to distant and feebler probabilities for that purpose.

'In proportion to the degree of efficiency with which a man suffers these instruments of deception to operate upon his mind, he enables bad men to exercise over him a sort of power, the thought of which ought to cover him with shame. Allow this argument the effect of a conclusive one, you put it into the power of any man to draw you at pleasure from the support of every measure, which in your own eyes is good, to force you to give your support to any and every measure which in your own eyes is bad. Is it good? —the bad man embraces it, and, by the supposition, you reject it. Is it bad?—he vituperates it, and that suffices for driving you into its embrace. You split upon the rocks, because he has avoided them; you miss the harbour, because he has steered into it! Give yourself up to any such blind antipathy, you are no less in the power of your adversaries than if, by a correspondently irrational sympathy and obsequiousness, you put yourself into the power of your friends.' pp. 132, 133.

'Besides, nothing but laborious application, and a clear and comprehensive intellect, can enable a man on any given subject to employ successfully relevant arguments drawn from the subject itself. To employ personalities, neither labour nor intellect is required. In this sort of contest, the most idle and the most ignorant are quite on a par with, if not superior to, the most industrious and the most highly-gifted individuals. Nothing can be more convenient for those who would speak without the trouble of thinking. The same ideas are brought forward, over and over again, and all that is required is to vary the turn of expression. Close and relevant arguments have very little hold on the passions, and serve rather to quell than to inflame them; while in personalities, there is always something stimulant, whether on the part of him who praises or him who blames. Praise forms a kind of connexion between the party praising and the party praised, and vituperation gives an air of courage and independence to the party who blames.

'Ignorance and indolence, friendship and enmity, concurring and conflicting interest, servility and independence, all conspire to give personalities the ascendancy they so unhappily maintain. The more we lie under the influence of our own passions, the more we rely on others being affected in a similar degree. A man who can repel these injuries with dignity may often convert them into triumph: "Strike me but hear," says he, and the fury of his antagonist redounds to his own discomfiture.' pp. 141, 142.

No Innovation!—To say that all new things are bad, is to say that all old things were bad in their commencement: For of all the old things ever seen or heard of, there is not one that

was not once new. Whatever is now establishment was once innovation. The first inventor of pews and parish clerks, was no doubt considered as a Jacobin in his day. Judges, juries, criers of the court, are all the inventions of ardent spirits, who filled the world with alarm, and were considered as the great precursors of ruin and dissolution. No inoculation, no turnpikes, no reading, no writing, no popery! The fool sayeth in his heart, and crieth with his mouth, 'I will have nothing new!'

Fallacy of Distrust, What's at the Bottom?—This fallacy begins with a virtual admission of the propriety of the measure considered in itself, and thus demonstrates its own futility, and cuts up from under itself the ground which it endeavours to make. A measure is to be rejected for something that, by bare possibility, may be found amiss in some other measure! This is vicarious reprobation; upon this principle Herod instituted his massacre. It is the argument of a driveller to other drivellers, who says, We are not able to decide upon the evil when it arises,—our only safe way is to act upon the general apprehension of evil.

Official Malefactor's Screen.—Attack us—you attack Government.

If this notion is acceded to, every one who derives at present any advantage from misrule, has it in fee simple; and all abuses, present and future, are without remedy. So long as there is any thing amiss in conducting the business of government, so long as it can be made better, there can be no other mode of bringing it nearer to perfection, than the indication of such imperfections as at the time being exist.

'But so far is it from being true that a man's aversion or contempt for the hands by which the powers of Government, or even for the system under which they are exercised, is a proof of his aversion or contempt towards Government itself, that, even in proportion to the strength of that aversion or contempt, it is a proof of the opposite affection. What in consequence of such contempt or aversion he wishes for, is, not that there be no hands at all to exercise these powers, but that the hands may be better regulated;—not that those powers should not be exercised at all, but that they should be better exercised;—not that, in the exercise of them, no rules at all should be pursued, but that the rules by which they are exercised should be a better set of rules.

'All government is a trust; every branch of government is a trust; and immemorially acknowledged so to be: it is only by the magnitude of the scale that public differ from private trusts. I complain of the conduct of a person in the character of guardian, as domestic guardian, having the care of a minor or insane person. In so doing, do I say that guardianship is a bad institu-

tion? Does it enter into the head of any one to suspect me of so doing? I complain of an individual in the character of a commercial agent, or assignee of the effects of an insolvent. In so doing, do I say that commercial agency is a bad thing? that the practice of vesting in the hands of trustees or assigness the effects of an insolvent, for the purpose of their being divided among his creditors, is a bad practice? Does any such conceit ever enter into the head of man, as that of suspecting me of so doing?' pp. 162, 163.

There are no complaints aganist government in Turkey—no motions in Parliament, no Morning Chronicles, and no Edinburgh Reviews: Yet, of all countries in the world, it is that in which revolts and revolutions are the most frequent.

It is so far from true, that no good government can exist consistently with such disclosure, that no good government can exist without it. It is quite obvious, to all who are capable of reflection, that by no other means than by lowering the governors in the estimation of the people, can there be hope or chance of beneficial change. To infer from this wise endeavour to lessen the existing rulers in the estimation of the people, a wish of dissolving the government is either artifice or error. The physician who intentionally weakens the patient by bleeding him, has no intention he should perish.

The greater the quantity of respect a man receives, independently of good conduct, the less good is his behaviour likely to be. It is the interest therefore of the public, in the case of each, to see that the respect paid to him should, as completely as possible, depend upon the goodness of his behaviour in the execution of his trust. But it is, on the contrary, the interest of the trustee, that the respect, the money, or any other advantage he receives in virtue of his office, should be as great, as secure, and as independent of conduct as possible. Soldiers expect to be shot at; public men must expect to be attacked, and sometimes unjustly. It keeps up the habit of considering their conduct as exposed to scrutiny; on the part of the people at large, it keeps alive the expectation of witnessing such attacks, and the habit of looking out for them. The friends and supporters of government have always greater facility in keeping and raising it up, than its adversaries have for lowering it.

Accusation-scarer's Device.—Infamy must attach somewhere.

This fallacy consists in representing the character of a calumniator as necessarily and justly attaching upon him who, having made a charge of misconduct against any persons possessed of political power or influence, fails of producing evidence sufficient for their conviction.

'If taken as a general proposition, applying to all public accusa-

tions, nothing can be more mischievous as well as fallacious. Supposing the charge unfounded, the delivery of it may have been accompanied with *mala fides* (consciousness of its injustice), with *temerity* only, or it may have been perfectly blameless. It is in the first case alone that infamy can with propriety attach upon him who brings it forward. A charge really groundless may have been honestly *believed* to be well founded, *i. e.* believed with a sort of provisional credence, sufficient for the purpose of engaging a man to do his part towards the bringing about an investigation, but without sufficient reasons. But a charge may be perfectly groundless without attaching the smallest particle of blame upon him who brings it forward. Suppose him to have heard from one or more, presenting themselves to him in the character of percipient witnesses, a story, which, either *in toto*, or perhaps only in *circumstances*, though in circumstances of the most material importance, should prove false and mendacious,—how is the person who hears this, and acts accordingly, to blame? What sagacity can enable a man previously to legal investigation, a man who has no power that can enable him to ensure correctness or completeness on the part of this extrajudicial testimony, to guard against deception in such a case?' pp. 185, 186.

Fallacy of False Consolation.—'*What is the matter with you?—What would you have? Look at the people there, and there; think how much better off you are than they are. Your prosperity and liberty are objects of their envy; your institutions models of their imitation.*'

It is not the desire to look to the bright side that is blamed: but when a particular suffering, produced by an assigned cause, has been pointed out, the object of many apologists is to turn the eyes of inquirers and judges into any other quarter in preference. If a man's tenants were to come with a general encomium on the prosperity of the country instead of a specified sum, would it be accepted? In a court of justice, in an action for damages, did ever any such device occur as that of pleading assets in the hands of a third person? There is in fact no country so poor and so wretched in every element of prosperity, in which matter for this argument might not be found. Were the prosperity of the country tenfold as great as at present, the absurdity of the argument would not in the least degree be lessened. Why should the smallest evil be endured, which can be cured; because others suffer patiently under greater evils? Should the smallest improvement attainable be neglected, because others remain contented in a state of still greater inferiority?

'Seriously and pointedly in the character of a bar to any measure of relief, no, nor to the most trivial improvement, can it ever be employed. Suppose a bill brought in for converting an impassable road

any where into a passable one, would any man stand up to oppose it who could find nothing better to urge against it than the multitude and goodness of the roads we have already? No: when in the character of a serious bar to the measure in hand, be that measure what it may, an argument so palpably inapplicable is employed, it can only be for the purpose of creating a diversion;—of turning aside the minds of men from the subject really in hand to a picture which by its beauty, it is hoped, may engross the attention of the assembly, and make them forget for the moment for what purpose they came there.' pp. 196, 197.

The Quietist, or no Complaint.—'A new law or measure being proposed in the character of a remedy for some incontestable abuse or evil, an objection is frequently started to the following effect:—"The measure is unnecessary. Nobody complains of disorder in that shape, in which it is the aim of your measure to propose a remedy to it. But even when *no* cause of complaint has been found to exist, especially under governments which admit of complaints, men have in general not been slow to complain; much less where any just cause of complaint has existed." The argument amounts to this:—Nobody complains, therefore nobody suffers. It amounts to a *veto* on all measures of precaution or prevention, and goes to establish a maxim in legislation, directly opposed to the most ordinary prudence of common life;—it enjoins us to build no parapets to a bridge till the number of accidents has raised an universal clamour.' pp. 190, 191.

Procrastinator's Argument.—'*Wait a little, this is not the time.*'

This is the common argument of men, who, being in reality hostile to a measure, are ashamed or afraid of appearing to be so. *To-day* is the plea—*eternal exclusion* commonly the object. It is the same sort of quirk as a plea of abatement in law—which is never employed but on the side of a dishonest defendant, whose hope it is to obtain an ultimate triumph, by overwhelming his adversary with despair, impoverishment, and lassitude. Which is the properest day to do good? which is the properest day to remove a nuisance? we answer, the very first day a man can be found to propose the removal of it; and whoever opposes the removal of it on that day will (if he dare) oppose it on every other. There is in the minds of many feeble friends to virtue and improvement, an imaginary period for the removal of evils, which it would certainly be worth while to wait for, if there was the smallest chance of its ever arriving—a period of unexampled peace and prosperity, when a patriotic King and an enlightened mob united their ardent efforts for the amelioration of human affairs; when the oppressor is as delighted to give up the oppression, as the oppressed is to be liberated from it; when the difficulty and the unpopularity would be to continue the evil, not to abolish it! These are the

periods when fair weather philosophers are willing to venture out, and hazard a little for the general good. But the history of human nature is so contrary to all this, that almost all improvements are made after the bitterest resistance, and in the midst of tumults and civil violence,—the worst period at which they can be made, compared to which any period is eligible, and should be seized hold of by the friends of salutary reform.

Snail's-pace Argument.—' *One thing at a time! Not too fast! Slow and sure!*—' Importance of the business—extreme difficulty of the business—danger of innovation—need of caution and circumspection—impossibility of foreseeing all consequences—danger of precipitation—every thing should be gradual—one thing at a time—this is not the time—great occupation at present—wait for more leisure—people well satisfied—no petitions presented—no complaints heard—no such mischief has yet taken place—stay till it has taken place!—Such is the prattle which the magpye in office who, understanding nothing, yet understands that he must have something to say on every subject, shouts out among his auditors as a succedaneum to thought.' pp. 203, 204.

Vague Generalities.—Vague Generalities comprehend a numerous class of fallacies resorted to by those who, in preference to the determinate expressions which they might use, adopt others more vague and indeterminate.

Take, for instance, the terms, Government, Laws, Morals, Religion. Every body will admit that there are in the world bad governments, bad laws, bad morals, and bad religions. The bare circumstance, therefore, of being engaged in exposing the defects of government, law, morals and religion, does not of itself afford the slightest presumption that a writer is engaged in any thing blameable. If his attack is only directed against that which is bad in each, his efforts may be productive of good to any extent. This essential distinction, however, the defender of abuses uniformly takes care to keep out of sight; and boldly imputes to his antagonists an intention to subvert all *government, law, morals, and religion.* Propose any thing with a view to the improvement of the existing practice, in relation to law, government, and religion, he will treat you with an oration upon the necessity and utility of law, government, and religion. Among the several cloudy appellatives which have been commonly employed as cloaks for misgovernment, there is none more conspicuous in this atmosphere of illusion than the word Order. As often as any measure is brought forward which has for its object to lessen the sacrifice made by the many to the few, *social order* is the phrase commonly opposed to its progress.

' By a defalcation made from any part of the mass of factitious delay, vexation and expense, out of which and in proportion to which

lawyers' profit is made to flow,—by any defalcation made from the mass of needless and worse than useless emolument to office, with or without service or pretence of service,—by any addition endeavoured to be made to the quantity, or improvement in the quality of service rendered, or time bestowed in service rendered in return for such emolument,—by every endeavour that has for its object the persuading the people to place their fate at the disposal of any other agents than those in whose hands breach of trust is certain, due fulfilment of it morally and physically impossible,—*social order* is said to be endangered, and threatened to be destroyed.' p. 234.

In the same way *Establishment* is a word in use to protect the bad parts of establishments, by charging those who wish to remove or alter them, with a wish to subvert all good establishments.

Mischievous fallacies also circulate from the convertible use of what Mr B. is pleased to call dyslogistic and eulogistic terms. Thus a vast concern is expressed for the *liberty of the press*, and the utmost abhorrence for its *licentiousness:* But then, by the licentiousness of the press is meant every disclosure by which any abuse is brought to light and exposed to shame—by the *liberty of the press* is meant only publications from which no such inconvenience is to be apprehended: And the fallacy consists in employing the sham approbation of liberty as a mask for the real opposition to all free discussion. To write a pamphlet so ill that nobody will read it; to animadvert in terms so weak and insipid upon great evils, that no disgust is excited at the vice, and no apprehension in the evil-doer, is a fair use of the liberty of the press, and is not only pardoned by the friends of government, but draws from them the most fervent eulogium. The licentiousness of the press consists in doing the thing boldly and well, in striking terror into the guilty, and in rousing the attention of the public to the defence of their highest interests. This is the licentiousness of the press held in the greatest horror by timid and corrupt men, and punished by semianimous semicadaverous judges, with a captivity of many years. In the same manner the dyslogistic and eulogistic fallacies are used in the case of reform.

'Between all abuses whatsoever, there exists that connexion,—between all persons who see each of them, any one abuse in which an advantage results to himself, there exists in point of interest that close and sufficiently understood connexion, of which intimation has been given already. To no one abuse can correction be administered without endangering the existence of every other.

'If, then, with this inward determination not to suffer, so far as depends upon himself, the adoption of any reform which he is able to prevent, it should seem to him necessary or advisable to put on for a cover, the profession or appearance of a desire to contribute to

such reform,—in pursuance of the device or fallacy here in question, he will represent that which goes by the name of reform as distinguishable into two species; one of them a fit subject for approbation, the other for disapprobation. That which he thus professes to have marked for approbation, he will accordingly, for the expression of such approbation, characterize by some adjunct of the *eulogistic* cast, such as moderate, for example, or temperate, or practical, or practicable.

'To the other of these nominally distinct species he will, at the same time, attach some adjunct of the *dyslogistic* cast, such as violent, intemperate, extravagant, outrageous, theoretical, speculative, and so forth.

'Thus, then, in profession and to appearance, there are in his conception of the matter two distinct and opposite species of reform, to one of which his approbation, to the other his disapprobation, is attached. But the species to which his approbation is attached is an *empty* species,—a species in which no individual is, or is intended to be, contained.

'The species to which his disapprobation is attached is, on the contrary, a crowded species, a receptacle in which the whole contents of the *genus*—of the genus *Reform* are intended to be included.' pp. 277–278.

Anti-rational Fallacies.—When reason is in opposition to a man's interests, his study will naturally be to render the faculty itself, and whatever issues from it, an object of hatred and contempt. The sarcasm and other figures of speech employed on the occasion are directed not merely against reason but against thought, as if there were something in the faculty of thought that rendered the exercise of it incompatible with useful and successful practice. Some times a plan, which would not suit the official person's interest, is without more ado pronounced a *speculative* one; and, by this observation, all need of rational and deliberate discussion is considered to be superseded. The first effort of the corruptionist is to fix the epithet *Speculative* upon any scheme which he thinks may cherish the spirit of reform. The expression is hailed with the greatest delight by bad and feeble men, and repeated with the most unwearied energy; and, to the word Speculative, by way of reinforcement, are added, *theoretical, visionary, chimerical, romantic, Utopian.*

'Sometimes a distinction is taken, and thereupon a concession made. The plan is *good in theory*, but it would be *bad in practice*, *i. e.* its being good in theory does not hinder its being bad in practice.

'Sometimes, as if in consequence of a farther progress made in the art of irrationality, the plan is pronounced to be *too good to be practicable*: and its being so good as it is, is thus represented as the very cause of its being bad in practice.

'In short, such is the perfection at which this art is at length arrived, that the very circumstance of a plan's being susceptible of the appellation of a *plan*, has been gravely stated as a circumstance sufficient to warrant its being rejected: rejected, if not with hatred, at any rate with a sort of accompaniment, which to the million, is commonly felt still more galling—with contempt.' p. 296.

There is a propensity to push theory too far; but what is the just inference? not that theoretical propositions (i. e. all propositions of any considerable comprehension or extent) should, from such their extent, be considered to be false *in toto*, but only that, in the particular case, inquiry should be made whether, supposing the proposition to be in the character of a rule generally true, an exception ought to be taken out of it. It might almost be imagined that there was something wicked or unwise in the exercise of thought; for every body feels a necessity for disclaiming it. 'I am not given to speculation, I am no friend to theories.' Can a man disclaim theory, can he disclaim speculation, without disclaiming thought?

The description of persons by whom this fallacy is chiefly employed, are those who, regarding a plan as adverse to their interests, and not finding it on the ground of general utility exposed to any preponderant objection, have recourse to this objection in the character of an instrument of contempt, in the view of preventing those from looking into it who might have been otherwise disposed. It is by the fear of seeing it practised that they are drawn to speak of it as impracticable. 'Upon 'the face of it (exclaims some feeble or pensioned gentle'man), it carries that air of plausibility, that, if you were not 'upon your guard, might engage you to bestow more or less of 'attention upon it; but were you to take the trouble, you would 'find that, (as it is with all these plans which promise so much), 'practicability would at last be wanting to it. To save yourself 'from this trouble, the wisest course you can take is to put the 'plan aside, and to think no more about the matter.' This is always accompanied with a peculiar grin of triumph.

The whole of these fallacies may be gathered together in a little oration, which we will denominate the *Noodle's Oration*. 'What would our ancestors say to this, Sir? How does this mea'sure tally with their institutions? How does it agree with their 'experience? Are we to put the wisdom of yesterday in com'petition with the wisdom of centuries? (*hear, hear*). Is beard'less youth to show no respect for the decisions of mature age? '(*Loud cries of hear! hear!*) If this measure is right, would it 'have escaped the wisdom of those Saxon progenitors to whom 'we are indebted for so many of our best political institutions?

' Would the Dane have past it over? Would the Norman have ' rejected it? Would such a notable discovery have been reserv- ' ed for these modern and degenerate times? Besides, Sir, if the ' measure itself is good, I ask the honourable gentleman if this is ' the time for carrying it into execution—whether, in fact, a more ' unfortunate period could have been selected than that which he ' has chosen? If this were an ordinary measure, I should not op- ' pose it with so much vehemence; but, Sir, it calls in question ' the wisdom of an irrevocable law—of a law past at the memorable ' period of the Revolution. What right have we, Sir, to break ' down this firm column, on which the great men of that day ' stampt a character of eternity? Are not all authorities against ' this measure, Pitt, Fox, Cicero, and the Attorney and Solicitor- ' General? The proposition is new, Sir; it is the first time it ' was ever heard in this house. I am not prepared, Sir,— ' this house is not prepared, to receive it. The measure im- ' plies a distrust of his Majesty's government; their disapproval ' is sufficient to warrant opposition. Precaution only is requisite ' where danger is apprehended. Here the high character of the ' individuals in question is a sufficient guarantee against any ' ground of alarm. Give not then your sanction to this measure; ' for, whatever be its character, if you do give your sanction to it, ' the same man by whom this is proposed, will propose to ' you others to which it will be impossible to give your con- ' sent. I care very little Sir, for the ostensible measure; but ' what is there behind? What are the honourable gentle- ' man's future schemes? If we pass this bill, what fresh conces- ' sions may he not require? What farther degradation is he plan- ' ning for his country? Talk of evil and inconvenience, Sir! ' look to other countries—study other aggregations and so- ' cieties of men, and then see whether the laws of this coun- ' try demand a remedy, or deserve a panegyric. Was the hon- ' ourable gentleman (let me ask him) always of this way of think- ' ing? Do I not remember when he was the advocate in this house ' of very opposite opinions? I not only quarrel with his present ' sentiments, Sir, but I declare very frankly I do not like the ' party with which he acts. If his own motives were as pure as ' possible, they cannot but suffer contamination from those ' with whom he is politically associated. This measure may ' be a boon to the constitution, but I will accept no favour to ' the constitution from such hands, (*Loud cries of hear! hear!*). ' I profess myself, Sir, an honest and upright member of the ' British Parliament, and I am not afraid to profess myself an ' enemy to all change, and all innovation. I am satisfied with ' things as they are; and it will be my pride and pleasure to

'hand down this country to my children as I received it from 'those who preceded me. The honourable gentleman pre- 'tends to justify the severity with which he has attacked the 'Noble Lord who presides in the Court of Chancery. But I 'say such attacks are pregnant with mischief to Government 'itself. Oppose Ministers, you oppose Government: Dis- 'grace Ministers, you disgrace Government: Bring Ministers 'into contempt, you bring Government into contempt; and 'anarchy and civil war are the consequences. Besides, Sir, 'the measure is unnecessary. Nobody complains of disorder 'in that shape in which it is the aim of your measure to propose 'a remedy to it. The business is one of the greatest import- 'ance; there is need of the greatest caution and circumspection. 'Do not let us be precipitate, Sir; it is impossible to foresee all 'consequences. Every thing should be gradual; the example of 'a neighbouring nation should fill us with alarm! The ho- 'nourable gentleman has taxed me with illiberality, Sir. I 'deny the charge. I hate innovation, but I love improvement. 'I am an enemy to the corruption o Government, but I de- 'fend its influence. I dread reform, but I dread it only when 'it is intemperate. I consider the liberty of the press as the 'great Palladium of the Constitution; but, at the same time, I 'hold the licentiousness of the press in the greatest abhorrence. 'Nobody is more conscious than I am of the splendid abilities 'of the honourable mover, but I tell him at once, his scheme is 'too good to be practicable. It savours of Utopia. It looks 'well in theory, but it wont do in practice. It will not do, I 'repeat, Sir, in practice; and so the advocates of the measure 'will find, if, unfortunately, it should find its way through Par- 'liament (*Cheers*). The source of that corruption to which the 'honourable member alludes, is in the minds of the people; 'so rank and extensive is that corruption, that no political re- 'form can have any effect in removing it. Instead of reform- 'ing others,—instead of reforming the State, the Constitution, 'and everything that is most excellent, let each man reform 'himself! let him look at home, he will find there enough to 'do, without looking abroad, and aiming at what is out of his 'power (*Loud cheers*). And now, Sir, as it is frequently the 'custom in this House to end with a quotation, and as the 'gentleman who preceded me in the debate, has anticipated 'me in my favourite quotation of the "Strong pull and the 'long pull," I shall end with the memorable words of the as- 'sembled Barons—*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*.'

'Upon the whole, the following are the characters which appertain in common to all the several arguments here distinguished by the name of fallacies:

'1. Whatsoever be the measure in hand, they are, with relation to it, irrelevant.

'2. They are all of them such, that the application of these irrelevant arguments, affords a presumption either of the weakness or total absence of relevant arguments on the side on which they are employed.

'3. To any good purpose they are all of them unnecessary.

'4. They are all of them not only capable of being applied, but actually in the habit of being applied, and with advantage, to bad purposes: viz. to the obstruction and defeat of all such measures as have for their object the removal of the abuses or other imperfections still discernible in the frame and practice of the government.

'5. By means of their irrelevancy, they all of them consume and misapply time, thereby obstructing the course, and retarding the progress of all necessary and useful business.

"6. By that irritative quality which, in virtue of their irrelevancy, with the improbity or weakness of which it is indicative, they possess, all of them, in a degree more or less considerable, but, in a more particular degree such of them as consist in personalities, they are productive of ill-humour, which in some instances has been productive of blood-shed, and is continually productive as above, of waste of time and hinderance of business.

'7. On the part of those who, whether in spoken or written discourses, give utterance to them, they are indicative either of improbity or intellectual weakness, or of a contempt for the understanding of those on whose minds they are destined to operate.

'8. On the part of those on whom they operate, they are indicative of intellectual weakness: and on the part of those in and by whom they are pretended to operate, they are indicative of improbity, viz. in the shape of insincerity.

'The practical conclusion is, that in proportion as the acceptance and thence the utterance of them can be prevented, the understanding of the public will be strengthened, the morals of the public will be purified, and the practice of government improved.' pp. 359–360.

Art. V. *Des Persecutions Religieuses dans le Canton de Vaud. (Extrait des Archives du Christianisme, Mars* 1824.) Paris, 1825.

It has long been matter of suspicion with many, that the credit obtained by Switzerland for toleration, liberality, and generally for pure love of liberty in all its forms, was considerably beyond her deserts. The struggle made by the Switzers of old against oppression, though infinitely less brilliant than that of the Dutch, had justly illustrated their name; and the asylum afforded for many years to persecuted men of other

countries, served to continue the fame of earlier times, after the publick conduct of the cantons in other respects had ceased to challenge any share of admiration. But in truth there were always deep stains upon the character of those States; and their traffic in mercenaries, whom they hired for money to be the body-guards of foreign tyrants, was a commerce only to be exceeded by our Slave Trade in national infamy. Acts of oppression were also far from unusual in many of the states—while, in most of them, a spirit of aristocracy, not to be paralleled in modern times, formed a plausible objection to the general scheme of their political administration.

The charges more recently brought against them for their truckling conduct towards foreign powers, were met by a defence, which, if it was humiliating, was certainly of some avail in turning aside indignation. Their weakness, it was urged, made resistance hopeless, and their fear of provoking a resentment which might prove fatal, was naturally alleged as the consequence of that weakness. Hence, they not only yielded to the orders of foreign powers and republicks, but oftentimes anticipated these orders by a time-serving demeanour. We doubt, however, whether any weakness can ever justify a state that affects to be independent, in such base acts as have of late years disgraced the Swiss government. They have allowed themselves to be made the tools of the Holy Allies, and expelled from their territories some of the most virtuous of men, who had taken refuge there from the unprincipled oppression of tyrants, and were, in all quiet and innocence, cultivating the the arts of peace. And as all slavish compliance is in its nature progressive, and apt even to engender new and more degrading baseness, we now find the most undisguised religious persecution patronized by those whom submission to the Holy Allies had trained to the practice of political oppression. The story alluded to in the able, temperate, and most interesting tract before us, would be hardly credible in the nineteenth century, were the scene laid in Madrid; or in any age, were Switzerland the place.

It seems, that for some time past, certain religionists have appeared in different parts of Switzerland, and have given offence to the bulk of the community, particularly in the Pays de Vaud, by the peculiarities of their habits. We cannot well describe otherwise, the differences which distinguish these persons; for though they are called a new sect, and treated as such, we do not find that they hold any peculiar tenets, or adopt any form of worship different from that of the Established Church. If they did, it could make no difference whatever in the argu-

ment; but it does so happen that they are only distinguished from the perfectly orthodox, that is, the ruling party, the majority, by a more fervent attachment to religious duties, and a more habitual indulgence in devotional contemplation and exercises; by making what all Christians profess to follow as the rule of life, indeed the rule of all their actions; by showing in their whole lives and conversations the deep interest they feel in religious subjects, that is, proving themselves to believe sincerely, by acting as if they sincerely believed, what all Christians profess to believe. The worst overt act of this heresy is said to be a habit of reading the scriptures in families, with a few neighbours assembled, unless it be deemed a still more aggravated outrage to have them occasionally expounded by the master of the house, or a neighbouring clergyman, and (to such shocking excesses will men go when once they have dared to depart from the Established Church and its ritual) accompanied with a prayer, or even a psalm, in the course of the evening. These sectaries, as they are termed, have in short some resemblance to the class whom all orthodox churchmen in England are taught to regard with abhorrence, since their numbers make it not so easy to treat them with contempt, under the appellation of evangelical, and vital Christians; that is, persons who are really what so many pretend to be—and as in our language they have got a nickname borrowed from the times when such men fought for our liberties and laid the foundation of our constitution; so in Switzerland the high churchmen are pleased to call them '*Momiers.*'

Their numbers were greatly on the increase; the good effects of their teaching were undeniable; there might be a mixture of extravagance in some of their practices; there might be a good deal for a philosopher to smile at; there might be somewhat for the more rational among themselves to disapprove. But in the main they were working in the vineyard, and doing great and effectual service in their generation, when of a sudden, the alarm, spreading probably from the church and the high aristocracy, certainly propagated if not excited by persons whose profligate habits were still more unequivocally scandalous than their irreligious opinions and demeanour were notorious, seized the executive government of the Vaudois, and an ordinance to restrain them was promulgated in the year 1823, which had scarcely been sufficiently meditated, and lamented by the sober-minded of every class and sect, when it was followed the year after by a law formally putting down the new sect, by regulations wholly unexampled for their violence and extreme folly. When we advisedly state that the free and tolerant Swiss have made a law against religious liberty, in its principles as persecuting,

and in its operation almost as harsh, except that it sheds no blood, as any under which the Roman or Spanish inquisition have acted, and that this law has gone far beyond the edicts of those famous tribunals in the absurdity of its structure, we shall not be believed without evidence, and we therefore subjoin the law itself.

'Le grand conseil du canton de Vaud, sur la proposition du conseil d'Etat,

'Considérant que quelques personnes exaltées cherchent à introduire et à propager *une nouvelle secte religieuse ;*

'Voulant réprimer les actes de cette secte, qui troublent l'ordre public, décréte :

'Article 1. Toute assemblée de partisans *de cette secte*, formée de personnes étrangeres à la famille, pour y exercer le culte, ou y célébrer quelqu'une des cérémonies de l'Eglise, est défundue, et sera immediatement dissoute.

'Art. 2. Les personnes qui auront présidé ou dirigé ces assemblées, y auront officié, ou auront fourni le local, seront responsables et punies de l'une des peines qui suivent.

'Art. 3. Tout acte de prosélytisme ou de séduction, tendant à gagner à cette secte, est interdit ; et celui ou ceux qui s'en seraient rendus coupables, seront punis de l'une des peines ci-aprés.

'Dans l'appréciation de la gravité du délit, et dans l'application de la peine, les tribunaux prendront en consideration la séduction exercée envers les instituteurs des colléges ou écoles, envers les personnes du sexe, ou celles qui sont sous l'authorité de parens ou tuteurs.

'Art. 4. Les contraventions aux articles 2 et 3 ci-dessus seront punies, ou par une amende qui ne pourra excéder six cents francs, ou par la défense d'aller ou de séjourner dans telle commune, ou par la confination dans une commune pour un temps qui ne pourra exceder une anée, ou par une prison de discipline qui ne pourra excéder une année, ou enfin par un bannissement hors du canton qui ne pourra excéder trois ans.

'Art. 5. La défence d'aller ou de séjourner dans une commune, sera convertie en confination du condamné dans sa commune, pour un temps qui ne pourra excéder une anée, dans le cas où il aurait enfreint cette défense.

'La confination dans une commune sera convertie en prison de discipline pour le reste du temps, si le condamné avait enfreint sa confination.

'Le bannissement hors du canton sera converti en prison de discipline pour le reste du temps, si le condamné avait rompu son ban.

'Art. 6. Toute cause qui aura pour objet un des délits prevus par le présente loi, sera nécessairement soumise au tribunal d'appeal.

'Art. 7. Le Conceil d'état est chargé de la publication et de l'exécution de la présente loi.

'Donné sous le grand sceau de l'etat, à Lausanne, le 20 mai 1824.' pp. 2, 3.

It is recorded, of one tyrant in ancient times, that he fixed

his laws so high upon the walls that no one could read them. Another, in modern times, having been suspected of murdering her husband, exposed his body to the people by way of removing all suspicions, but drove the curious off with the bayonet, if they approached near enough to judge of its appearance; and a third (who soon after met the same fate), having prohibited a long list of foreign books, found this only made people more anxious to buy them, and therefore prohibited the list itself. The Legislature of Lausanne is by no means behind its predecessors in the refined absurdities of its arrangements; for it denounces severe penalties against something, well known doubtless to itself, and which it may communicate secretly to the '*Council of State charged with executing this present law*;' but which it carefully avoids describing, or even mentioning, to the subject who is called upon, under those penalties, to abstain from doing the thing, whatever it may be. We should like to see, as a judicial, or rather a legislative curiosity, (for it must be more a new law than an act of Judicature) the indictment, or whatever it may be termed, procured for a contravention of this law. It must run somewhat after this fashion. 'The jurors, &c., on their oaths, do say, that A B, being a 'well disposed person, and being, in truth and in fact, one of 'the people called Christians, having the fear of God constantly before his eyes, and being moved thereto by the instigation of the Holy Spirit, did pray to God according to the 'forms and ceremonies of the Church, as by law established, 'in a certain assembly of persons belonging to *a new religious* '*sect, to the jurors unknown*, and so did commit offence to the 'jurors likewise unknown, against the form of the statute in '*some* case made and provided, to the great displeasure of Almighty God, to the evil example of others in any case offending, and against the peace,' &c.

The only thing, in short, which the law, a law highly penal and summary, leaves wholly undetermined, indeed quite unknown, and not even named, is *the offence* which it would denounce and punish! For the offence is harbouring, directing, or officiating, at assemblies of the partisans of *a certain sect*; but the only description given of the sect, is 'this, or the said sect,' referring to the preamble, and there it is only stated to be 'a new religious sect, which some enthusiastic persons are seeking to introduce and to propagate.' It is no otherwise described; not at all named; its existence even is nowhere averred as a fact; we are rather led to disbelieve it,—for the enthusiasts are only said to be attempting its introduction. These profound lawgivers, therefore, know, or think they know, what they would be at themselves;

they are for putting down, at all hazards, a something which they cannot describe, or even give a distinct name to; and being armed with power, they think it enough to say—'Don't do what we want you not to do, for if you should, we shall punish you severely.' But if the subject of these just and enlightened legislators were to ask, what it is from which he must abstain, their honours would be sorely gravelled; and their only answer must be, 'Nay, that's quibbling and cavilling. You know what we would be at; obey at your peril.' This grave act of legislation really resembles the wayward caprice of a spoilt child,—which would be humoured without taking the trouble, or perhaps being able, to tell in what way it wishes to be humoured; or of some half-besotted vulgar rake, who damns all sanctity; and were he suddenly armed with the awful power he in his thoughtless words assumes, could not, by any means, point out the spot where the bolt must fall. We verily believe this law stands alone among the ordinances of civilized, or even half-civilized countries, in this respect. Some laws may give a more, some a less explicit definition, of what they mean to prohibit and punish; but here is, for the first time in a country that plumes itself on its progress in philosophy,—and, above all in metaphysics and jurisprudence,—the country of Bonnet, Dumont, Neckar, and Stael, a penal act, *without any definition at all* of the crime; a solemn law passed, with the avowed intent of encroaching upon liberty of conscience and worship, and denouncing heavy penalties against an undescribed, unknown, unnamed offence,—an offence only alluded to by way of reference, as to something supposed to be going on in the world, but without saying what or how.

We are aware, that any further comments upon a law such as this, or any exposition of its absurdity, may seem superfluous, when there lies on its head no less an imperfection than concealing the crime it professes to punish. Yet the novelty and importance of the subject may seem to justify some further attention to its details. And here it is to be remarked, the Swiss government is left wholly without its accustomed excuse. Weakness of resources will not palliate an act which it is not pretended any strong neighbour ever forced upon it. The great offence of reviving openly, and in the present day, the most shameless system of persecution, is all its own. It has volunteered in this infamous service; and nothing but a speedy and open retractation can save the name and character of the Swiss from lasting reproach, among all to whom either religion or liberty are yet dear.

Let it be observed, then, in continuation, that we have here,

for the first time in the history of tyranny, civil or religious, a punishment awarded to certain persons, or rather to undescribed persons, not for anything they have done or omitted, but because they, being persons of a particular kind, have done things allowed to every other class of persons. The crime consists not in *doing* something, but in *being* something; and that something is left unspecified. But suppose it were distinctly specified; suppose every one knew, from the words of the law, who and what the members of the forbidden sect were, nay, that they were pointed out by their names and residences, still did any mortal ever before dream of prohibiting an act quite lawful to all mankind, merely because done by certain persons? Unless, indeed, our own Five Mile Act, which forbid dissenters from coming to certain towns. The Swiss improve on this last stage of persecuting tyranny, and make it highly penal for the sectaries in question to worship God in the way prescribed to all men by the religion and laws of the State; they must not celebrate any of the ceremonies of the Established Church. If they do; if any man reads the Bible in his family, or prays, or sings a Psalm, and a neighbour happens to be present on a visit, or by calling in the evening, the assembly is illegal, and the master of the house, and those who have assisted him in these simple offices of the reformed religion, are liable to imprisonment for one year, and banishment for three.

Again, certain things are specially prohibited under the same heavy penalties; under the very vague and indefinite names of 'acts of proselytism or of seduction, *tending* to gain over persons to the said sect.' Now it never was defined what the said sect was; not even any name was given to it. But suppose it had been ever so clearly pointed out, who shall say in what consists an act tending to gain over any one to that sect? A conversation upon morals or religion; a prayer delivered in a young person's presence; a hymn chanted before him, nay, a sermon preached in an established church on the excellence of the Christian dispensation; and the necessity of taking seriously to heart its precepts and doctrines, may all have the tendency to gain over persons to a sect which is only distinguished by the fervour of its Christian feelings. What man, in the face of this law, shall be safe in either reading the scriptures or expounding them? A word in favour of a stricter life than it pleases the lawgiver to lead—an exhortation to greater sanctity of demeanour than he may deem decorous, or his wife and daughters may find convenient—a denunciation against those who, pretending to be Christians, are so in name only—all the ordinary topics of sermons, even in the coldest and most regular pulpits,

are, if any one chooses to prosecute under the new code of persecution, placed within its provisions. The solemn and impressive reading of the scriptural denunciations against worldly-mindedness, and incentives to serve God with the heart rather than the lips—the bare pronouncing of the sermon on the Mount, without note or comment, would clearly be an act tending to gain proselytes to the new sect. In truth, it is the very doctrine of what is called the sect, that the best recommendation of the genuine Christian life is the careful study of the Scriptures themselves; and there is hardly a step from this worse than Eastern edict to a general prohibition of the Bible.

As new caprices in tyrants have given rise to novel punishments, so a new and uncouth name is introduced in the law to denote the new punishment denounced along with fine, prison, and exile. A person convicted, that is, suspected (for there is here absolutely no difference) of being something which the legislature pleases to take offence at, is liable also to '*confination*;' that is, to being prohibited for a year from going across the boundaries of his own district, even if he should have, as constantly happens in Switzerland, part of his farm lying in one, and part in another district; or his house in one, and his fields in another; or his farm in one, and his market in another; or his family in one, and his church, or physician, or school, or midwife in another; and in all cases of contravention, whether of the year's '*confination*,' or of the three years' expulsion, the residue of the term, even if it be two years and a half, must be passed in a dungeon. Save us from the liberty of word and action, the freedom of religious worship, the lenity of criminal law by which the honest Swiss are so happily distinguished from the Algerines and the Turks!

Doubtless, among the many singularities which distinguish this from all former laws against religious liberty, one cannot have escaped any reader learned in the history of persecutions. The priest does not here appear—at least, not in his own person, or even by any clerical or ecclesiastical act whatever. No opinions are stated as dangerous to the Church, or to the religion of the state, or to Christianity generally; no heresy is denounced as such by the proper authorities, that is, the ecclesiastical tribunals. These have, indeed, no room for interfering in this case; for there is no heterodox opinion or observance imputed to the sect in question; all their doctrines and all their practices are strictly conformable to the faith and the ritual of the state and the community; and, for the first time, in the history of human violence and inconsistency, the penalties of the law are de-

nounced against the zeal of those who cultivate the religion protected by the law, and in the manner which the law approves.

'Attacher,' says the judicious writer of the work before us, 'des conditions pénales, telles que la privation des droits civils ou politiques, à un changement de religion, c'est en tout cas une grande injustice; néanmoins on conçoit qu'une pareille loi puisse s'exécuter lorsqu'il s'agit de religions dont les cérémonies sont différentes, et que le magistrat civil peut reconnaître à des caractères extérieurs. Mais ici rien de semblable. Les dissidens professent ostensiblement le même culte que la majorité; ils protestent de leur fidélité scrupuléuse à la confession de foi helvétique, dont tous les Pasteurs du canton ont juré comme eux de faire la base de leur enseignment. La distinction qui existe entre eux est donc toute spirituelle, et une inquisition, telle que celle de Rome ou de Madrid, peut seule prétendre à la reconnaître et à la punir.' p. 6.

The reason urged in defence of this strange law is not the least remarkable part of its history. Its defenders, or rather apologists, rest the measure upon the strong feelings entertained by the great majority of the people against the hated sect:—'La majorité est fortement prononcée; le peuple est acharné contre les *mômiers;* il n'en veut à aucun prix. Il faut bien se conformer aux vœux du plus grand nombre.' We say the *apologists* of the measure thus express themselves; its defenders they are not; for they assume its condemnation by the topic they urge in extenuation of its guilt. Mark, first of all, the gross inconsistency of this topic with the grounds stated for passing the law, in the preamble, namely, the apprehension of proselytism, and the necessity of preventing the sect from making progress in converting the people. But it now seems, the people are one and all so violent against the sect, that the penalties are inflicted out of deference to their exasperated feelings. Then, what better security against the apprehended mischief can there be, than the unpopularity of the tenets and discipline of the sectaries, against whom the community, down to the very rabble, are excited even to violence? We are told of 'la foule attroupée—des cris—des imprecations—des menaces proferées contre des citoyens paisibles en apparence, et qui ne reclament d'autre privilege que celui de rester tranquilles dans l'asile de leur maison—enfin des scenes de desordre dignes de la populace de Naples ou de Madrid.' Yet these are the sectaries whom it is necessary to prevent by new laws from converting the multitude; and this is the people whom it requires the Legislature to protect from such a seduction. But the greatest absurdity remains behind; the means of checking this conversion are precisely the only ones which could be devised for promoting it. The sect is already unpopular, says the government; therefore

let us persecute, in order to make it popular. We confess our scepticism, however, touching this kind of defence: We do not think quite so meanly of the cunning of these workmen, bunglers though they be in the arts of oppression. We suspect the new sect is not quite so unpopular as is pretended; that it has deep roots in the respectable portion of the religious and reflecting people among whom it is established; and that profligate men are seeking to check its progress, under the pretence of its being unpopular; a pretence derived from affecting to take the clamours of the rabble in a few towns for the sense of the people at large. Be this however as it may, the design is not the less sure to frustrate itself, and propagate the very thing intended to be stifled. Let it nevertheless be borne in mind, that the lawgiver who sees a people, or any portion of a people, labouring under a delusion, and carried by it to acts of violence and injustice, commits the most crying breach of his trust that can be imagined, if, instead of checking, he encourages such lawless enormities. This edict was made at a time when the mobs were committing acts of scandalous outrage against all law in their hatred of the new sect. Ought not the government to have taken part with the victims of those outrages rather than the perpetrators? Was it at such a moment fitting to denounce the sect, already a prey to lawless violence; at a moment when such scenes as these were enacting?

'Ici, un ministre de l'évangile est insulté par la populace, 'sa maison est attaquée, ses vitres sont brisées; là, ce sont des 'femmes que l'on maltraite et que l'on injurie; ailleurs, deux 'frères, dont le seul crime était d'avoir chanté des psaumes dans 'une réunion dissidente, sont poursuivis à coups de pierres et 'de bâtons; on les renverse, on les traîne par les cheveux, on 'les abreuve d'outrages, des cris blasphématoires accompagnent 'cette scène scandaleuse, et un déni de justice et la seule ré-'paration qu'obtiennent les victimes; dans un autre lieu, l'effi-'gie d'un citoyen innocent est prise pour but d'un tirage de 'carabine, un magistrat est présent à cette plaisanterie de canni-'bales; et, loin que les acteurs en soient punis, c'est le citoyen 'insulté que l'on bannit de sa patrie.' p. 13.

But the neverfailing defence of bad laws in the mouths of weak men—those unresisting persons whom bad rulers count upon as sure supporters of their worst measures—is not wanting here. The law, though bad enough, it is said, is sure not to be executed—and the more so the worse it is, of course. To which a neverfailing answer is always speedily given by the authors of the hated edicts; who wont suffer them to lie dormant, merely to back the arguments of feeble, complying defenders, whose

support they always make sure of, and whose hostility they never give themselves any trouble about. Accordingly, we have the following notable sample, selected, we are told, from among several others that occured, during the first half year's *non-execution* of the law.

'Nous n'en citerons qu'un exemple entre plusieurs. C'est le procès qui a eu lieu à Vevay, dans le plus admirable site de la terre, dans un pays dont la richesse et la beauté sembleraient ne devoir appeler dans tous les cœurs que reconnaissance envers la Divinité et bienveillance chrétienne envers les hommes.

'Une plainte est portée contre M. Charles Rochat, ministre du Saint Evangile, comme réunissant chez lui une assemblée religieuse illicite. Le nom obscur du dénonciateur ne nous est pas parvenu, mais l'ignoble grossièreté de son langage et de ses mœurs se trahit à chaque ligne de la dénonciation. Sur une telle plainte, un agent de police se rend au domicile de M. Rochat, il parcourt la maison sans rencontrer personne; et, comme il allait se retirer, M. Rochat lui-même le conduit dans une chambre au second étage, où il trouve réunies cinq personnes, la femme de M. Rochat, un de leurs amis communs avec deux de ses sœurs, et une jeune personne étrangère à la famille. Ces cinq auditeurs étaient ranges autour d'une table sur laquelle on voyait un livre ouvert. Ce livre était la Bible, dont M. Rochat venait de lire et d'expliquer un chapitre. Voilà le corps du délit.

'L'instruction commence; M. Rochat est mis en accusation; de nombreux témoins sont appelés et entendus; on les sollicite, on les presse de questions. Tous les témoignages sont d'accord; les débats n'ajoutent et n'ôtent rien à la déclaration de l'agent de police; le délit reste le même, sans être aggravé ni atténué. Il demeure constant que, dans sa propre maison, M. Rochat *a lu un chapitre de l'Evangile en présence de sa femme et de quatre personnes de leurs amis*; et qu'il a prié Dieu de bénir les explications dont il avait accompagné cette lecture.

'Tel est le crime dans toute son étendue; nous n'en avons rien dissimulé. Voilà, certes, une action bien coupable et bien dangereuse: l'ordre social serait compromis, si elle restait impunie! Aussi le ministère public conclut-il à ce que M. Rochat soit confiné pour un an dans sa commune. Mais ce n'est point assez aux yeux des magistrats; le châtiment ne serait pas proportionné à l'offense; ils appliquent donc sans hésiter le maximum de la peine, et M. Rochat est condamné à trois ans de bannissement hors de sa patrie!! Si, en traitant le sujet qui nous occupe, notre cœur était moins navré; si nous étions animés d'une affection moins intime pour la Suisse et pour le canton de Vaud; si enfin le sentiment de l'injustice ne faisait pas disparaître toute autre pensée, de quelles innombrables critiques pareille procédure ne serait-elle pas l'objet?

'L'équité veut que nous ajoutions que la sentence de M. Rochat

a été réduite à un an de bannissement par le tribunal d'appel; mais suffit-il d'une moindre injustice pour réparer une injustice plus criante?

'A de légères différences près, le jugement de M. Rochat peut donner l'idée des procédures instruites contre les autres ministres dissidens, MM. Olivier, Juvet, Chavannes, Fivas. Leurs défenses ne sont point sous nos yeux, mais nous en avons entendu citer quelques fragmens; et si leur argumentation sur la loi nous a quelquefois paru faible, nous avons été vivement touchés du sentiment religieux qui se manifeste dans leurs discours. Il semble qu'ils aient été moins occupés du soin de se défendre que du désir de faire entendre à leur auditoire quelques-unes des grandes vérités de l'Evangile. Et si nous sommes bien informés, leur piété n'a pas été sans récompense, quelques préjugés ont été détruits, quelques cœurs ont été touchés, quelques hommes sont sortis de l'audience plus chrétiene qu'ils n'y étaient entrés.' pp. 10, 11.

We need surely go no further in our comments on this most disgraceful subject—the very worst passage in the Helvetick story—one of the worst traits in the history of any modern and civilized people; and only to be forgotten, if it ever can be overlooked, by a sudden abandonment of the wrong, and return to the right path—in which the Swiss were generally wont to tread. The good conduct of some of the clergy on this occasion merits notice. An affecting and earnest petition was presented by twenty-six pastors of the Established church, praying the government to relax its rigour and grant toleration to their sectarian brethren. They assert their unaltered devotion to the creed and discipline of the establishment; but entreat the civil power to leave to God the punishment of offences which regard God alone. Is it conceivable that we should, at this time of day, be actually praising men for lisping the first accents of religious toleration? But how much more incredible is it that a *Swiss* Government should, well on in the *nineteenth* century, have to learn such purely elementary lessons of religious liberty, and that, from the clergy of their own established church! *

Art. VI. *Considerations on the Office of Public Prosecutor.* By a Barrister. pp. 84. London.

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* The excellent Tract which has given occasion to these reflections, and which contains the facts they rest upon, is ascribed to one of the most able and enlightened, as well as amiable friends of liberty whom the present day has to boast of—the Baron de Staël.

WE have formerly had occasion to observe upon the extraordinary powers vested by the Law of Scotland in the Lord Advocate—powers wholly repugnant to the genius of our free constitution, and which nothing but the greatest vigilance of superintendance, both in the public and in Parliament, could prevent from becoming intolerable in a free country. Some of those powers, as regards the administration of criminal justice, are excessive; and the addition of a Grand Jury to control them, would, beyond all doubt, be a most salutary improvement. This is a subject of vast importance to the well-being of this part of the kingdom; and we shall take an early occasion of recurring to it, and of claiming for it the attention of Mr Kennedy, and such others of our distinguished and enlightened countrymen as devote themselves to Scottish Judicial Reform. But in the mean time, we wish rather to point out, for the benefit of the sister country, that portion of the Lord Advocate's office which appears beneficial,—we mean his function of public prosecutor, which, under proper checks, and with some slight amendment, we believe to be extremely useful, and in England a grand desideratum.

In approaching so alarming a subject as the English Criminal Law, we naturally feel the awe inspired by the difficulties of all points of foreign Jurisprudence, and still more the fear of touching with a profane hand that which its own Doctors have unanimously pronounced to be the perfection of human reason. No English manufacturer, or philosopher either, and hardly, we suppose, any English Judge or even Bishop, ever thinks of calling Lord Worcester's machine the perfection of human steam engines; But laws made at a period so remote that their existence, in a written form at least, is questionable—when the people, rulers and all, were plunged into such a state of ignorance, that reading and writing was the accomplishment of a distinguished few in the whole community, not always including the monarch himself—when man of letters and priest were synonymous with one able to sign his name, and this pre-eminence gave an immunity from capital punishments for the worst offences—nay, when in certain cases men's civil rights, and their innocence or guilt of criminal charges, were tried either by the hard swearing of their friends, or their own skill in single combat judicially, unless they could be more summarily settled extrajudicially by the fights of their retainers,—it seems that laws made in those ages, the fruits of such vast legislative accomplishment, such perfect capacity for comparing and forming systems of jurisprudence, are of necessity to be regarded as the most precious monuments of profound wisdom and learned experience; and all the real wisdom

gained from the centuries of experience that we have since had to extend our knowledge and improve our skill, must be thrown aside, as only encouraging a profane disrespect for the ignorance and barbarism of our ancestors. We are quite aware, therefore, of the perils that beset their path who would humbly adventure a suggestion, that all is not absolutely perfect which was invented before the time of legal memory. How much more desperate does our lot appear, when we are rash enough to avow a belief that nothing in those rude and venerable ages, not even the trial by fire and water, is more barbarous, and betokens a greater want of improvement, or more indicates that all experience has been thrown away upon us, and that we are still in the very infancy of the science of government and legislation, than our disposition to regard the notions of our ancestors as perfect in proportion to their antiquity, and to shrink from availing ourselves of the lights of subsequent experience. It is the veriest solecism and blunder that can be committed, and arises from a confusion of words—a quibble on terms rather than a confusion of ideas. As Lord Bacon observed, it comes from supposing the world to have been older in former times, merely because its inhabitants, had they been living now, would have been more aged than ourselves.

In those barbarous times then, it was left in a great degree to private individuals to right themselves; and when injured by the criminal conduct of their neighbours, they were obliged to redress their own wrongs by law—as, in a stage of society not much less civilized, they had been wont to seek redress by force. A man might even commit crimes with impunity in one period of our judicial history, if he could but afford to pay the price of his guilt; and the value of life itself was estimated in the currency of the realm. This is very ancient law, and very venerable: And we only marvel that the praisers of ancient institutions do not commend the Weregild; for the modern practice of hanging, and above all of hanging priests, for murder, is a mere innovation; highly irreverent towards the wisdom of our ancestors and the accomplishments of the 'Olden Time.' The redress by appeal, in murder, coupled with the right of the appellee to wage his battle, that is, to fight with the next of kin of the murdered person, is an invention of the same great era of the common law; and has had a better fate than the more venerable Weregild; for it was only abolished within the last five or six years, by a profane Act of Parliament. We cannot help classing the method of putting the criminal law in motion, by private prosecutors, as nearly akin to those remnants of most antique wisdom, and manifestly smelling of the same age.

When any offence, however grave, is committed in England, the care of bringing the offender to punishment is in every case devolved upon the private party injured, or supposed to be injured; or in the rare cases of the party injured being killed, and having no relations, or of the injury being done to a pauper, then the prosecution is intrusted to the parish officers. The only practical exceptions to this are where towns have undertaken the care of prosecuting for offences. But these are no exceptions in our view of the subject; they rather prove our rule; for such arrangements have arisen from the glaring evils which grew out of the system, and are partial correctives of those evils. The general principle however is, that the private party voluntarily prosecutes, or is bound over to prosecute, by the magistrate who commits the offender. In the one case, he undergoes all the expense of a prosecution, with the risk at least of not being allowed his expenses, (and lately a Judge refused to order this allowance, because one of the witnesses for the prosecution offended him by his demeanour). In the other case, he *may*, if he pleases, avoid the law expenses, but he is subject to the trouble and personal expense of attending to give evidence; and in both cases it depends on his good will and pleasure whether he ever appears to prosecute or give evidence, or not. If the prosecution is voluntary, he may drop it; if he is bound over, he may forfeit the small sum in the recognizance, and he hears no more about it; Nor does the prisoner—for he is acquitted for want of prosecution, and can never be tried again.

Publick prosecutor there is none, in any sense of the word. The Clerk of the Peace is none; he is merely the officer of the magistrate, whose functions are judicial; and who may have to preside at the trial, if it is tried at the Quarter-sessions. The committing magistrate is none, though he comes, perhaps nearer than the others, to a guardian of the law's execution; but he, too, is rather judicial even in committing, and he may sit on the trial himself: as to his powers of binding over, they only serve to acknowledge, by matter of record, the want of an efficient prosecutor. Finally, the Attorney-General is none; for he has no more power of originating a prosecution, in its constitutional form, before a Grand Jury, than any other person in or out of office. He must proceed like another person, by preferring a bill; so that in practice he never acts as a prosecutor, except as any other functionary of the State does, by directing, when he happens officially to see matter fit for inquiry in the course of his other duties, that a bill should be [illegible]rred, a thing which very rarely happens. He has indeed, [illegible]ses, the power of stopping a prosecution, by entering

his Nolle Prosequi, a power very rarely exercised; and he has a power of filing *ex officio* informations for misdemeanours; but this extends not to felonies at all; and as to misdemeanours, it is practically confined to cases of sedition, libel, and offences against the revenue laws, and matters incident to State offences. Substantially, then, there is nothing like a public prosecutor in England; a person charged with putting the criminal law in motion, and giving the publick some security that offences shall not escape unpunished, from private fear, favour, or corruption.

It seems enough to state this fact, to show how great a defect this is in the judicial system of our neighbours. But let us pursue for a little way its known practical consequences. Let a few facts speak of these, for they speak more plainly than many comments.

A wealthy Baronet is pleased to fire a loaded fowling-piece at a reverend clergyman with whom he is at variance. He is seized and carried before a Justice; and the offence being capital, he is committed. He appeals for leave to be at large, upon bail. This is refused. The Assizes are near, otherwise he must have been discharged, on that commitment at least; for it does not specify that the firing was with intent to do a grievous bodily harm, and does therefore not bring the case within Lord Ellenborough's Act, but only shows a misdemeanour to have been charged. However, he is brought to trial. The indictment happened not to have the same blunder with the warrant, which it well might, there being no responsible officer to prepare it, and then no conviction could have been had, whatever was the evidence; and if the Grand Jury had been discharged before the flaw was perceived, he must have been discharged by proclamation. But he was equally safe, or rather he was better off,—for no prosecutor appeared. The Judge called in vain for witnesses, when the prisoner stood on his trial, after being regularly arraigned. His Lordship asked in what sums they had been bound over to appear, and found it was in the usual trifling amount. He added, that he never saw a case more loudly calling for a trial, but all to no purpose. The parties had, it seems, made up the matter; the defendant was of necessity acquitted; and having been tried upon a formal and sufficient indictment, he can never again be tried, until he fires at another reverend neighbour. This is a very recent case. It happened at the last Assizes for one of the Midland counties.

Some months ago there was a fight, as it seems to be [illegible] accurately termed, at one of the great publick schoo[illegible]

after a long strife between the two boys, accompanied with somewhat extraordinary circumstances of encouragement to the combatants, one of them was carried home languishing, and (as the indictment says) 'languishing, did die' the same evening. An inquest was held on the body, and a verdict of manslaughter, or murder, (we forget which), was returned. No one coming forward to prefer a bill before the Grand Jury, the survivor was put upon his trial, on the Coroner's inquest; and neither prosecutor nor witness appearing, was of course acquitted. The Judge demanded the sum in which the witnesses had been bound over, and found that it was twenty pounds. Any man of moderate fortune could of course pay this, and ten times as much. The relations of the deceased abstained from prosecuting, probably because they entertained a foolish and wholly illegal notion, that, the battle being a fair one, no crime had been committed. This is wholly contrary to the law of the land, we suppose of every Christian land, nay, of every civilized land, even as regards *men:* But what a gross outrage on all common sense! what a perversion of the laws of honour to purposes wholly foreign to them, was it in those who thought that code could apply to the quarrels of schoolboys! See the grievous folly, too, of the school and its Directors. They, of all men, should have taken care to prosecute; it was the only atonement they could make for the scandalous infraction of the law of England just committed, under the shelter of the law of the school. They feared to expose their want of discipline, no doubt; they were alarmed for the reputation of the place; they dreaded the consequences of having one boy at their school convicted for killing another; therefore they desired to have the whole matter hushed up. They countenanced the greatest breach of law and religion that can be committed, under the illegal and unchristian pretext, that the affair was justified by the laws of honour, although never, till now, were those laws extended to a grammar school here. Again, no notice was taken of this in Parliament; probably out of misplaced tenderness for the relations of the parties; possibly, too, from fear of hurting the character of a seminary so cherished by the higher classes. The parties were very young, it is said—they were under sixteen. But have we not seen boys of fourteen tried, nay, capitally convicted; boys of fifteen and sixteen hanged? And though many disapprove of the extent of such punishments, who ever dreamt that those offenders should have gone without any penalty, or even trial at all? Suppose two boys in humble life had so fought, and one had fallen; does any man living doubt that the survivor, against whom the Coroner's

jury had found a verdict of felony, would have been tried, convicted, and punished? Have we not, therefore, a right to say, in this instance, that there was one law for the rich, and another for the poor. But if there had been a public prosecutor, he would not have dared to desert his duty to the country and the profession he belonged to. On him the love of great schools would have made no impression; *his* ear would have been deaf to the entreaties of friends; *he* would have felt none of the delicacies of individuals towards the family of those who had killed their relation; to him the law of honour would have been a dead letter; and therefore, the law of the land would have been saved by him from the scandalous outrage committed upon it, almost without observation; it would have been spared the charge, now no longer a metaphor or a declamation, that it shows an aspect of complacency to the rich, and of frowns to the poor.

These cases may be supposed but rare; if indeed they were frequent, the people would not bear it; at least we trust they would not. But the defeating of criminal justice, for want of the responsible officer we are treating of, is frequent enough; it is, in short, as frequent as there is any motive to frustrate the ends of justice; that is, as often as any rich man would escape from punishment, or any indolent or misjudging person would shrink from the task of prosecuting.

It is not above three years since a wealthy man, in one of our principal ports, committed a forgery, under a temporary embarrassment. He was detected, and imprisoned; the proper party was bound over to prosecute him; the case came on; nobody appeared; the recognizances were estreated, of course; and the wealthy felon walked forth to his bankers, and drew a check to pay the forfeiting party's expenses! Could this scandal possibly have happened, had there been an officer of the law answerable for its due execution? Or can we say that the Crown does see the law executed, as long as these scenes are enacted? Or *can* the Crown execute it without such an officer? Or can we allege, with the least regard to truth, that the law is one and the same to all conditions of persons, while such defects exist?

Again, how many offences are unpunished, nay, passed over in silence, from the unwillingness of parties to come forward and prosecute? Humanity misplaced in some; peculiar notions of criminal jurisprudence in others (notions possibly right in themselves, but repugnant to the law of the land, which, if wrong, should be amended, and as long as it remains unaltered should be executed); mere laziness in many; in almost all, dislike of

expense and risk; operate not merely to keep back prosecutors, but to stifle accusations. A man who has been injured, says nothing of it, for fear of being obliged to prosecute; or one who suspects he has been injured, rests in half ignorance, to avoid discovering guilt which he might be forced to see punished. It is well known, that one of the principal arguments urged for relaxing the absurd rigour of the penal code, was its tendency to deter prosecutors from doing their duty to the public, an argument of undeniable weight, nay, wholly unanswerable, as the law now stands respecting prosecutors. Yet, strange to tell, the very persons who most stoutly resisted the relaxation of the penal code, and who could at once have met this topic, by consigning its execution to a public prosecutor, not only never dreamt of such a change, but would probably urge their favourite *arguments* of ancient wisdom, 'established 'order of things,' and 'dangerous novelties,' against the very amendment which would answer the principal reasons for repealing the severe penalties they so strenuously defend. It will not for a moment be supposed that we are seeking the means of supporting that severity. If the argument against it, drawn from its tendency to prevent prosecutions, were removed, there would still remain reason enough for rejecting it, in the difficulty of getting juries to convict, and the public to go along with the sentence. But the argument in question arises from another defect in the system, which may be remedied; while the other reasons are wholly incapable of being removed. These, therefore, are the true grounds on which to oppose the rigour of the penal code; *that* is one not founded in the nature of the thing, and capable of being obviated without any reform of the abuse itself.

We trust that enough has been said to expose the imperfections of the system which our Southern neighbours deem the very standard of excellence, in one, and that not the least important of its branches; the mainspring which puts the whole machine of criminal administration in motion. If any further argument were desired, it might well be found in the evils, hardly less than the one now described, resulting from the expedients resorted to for alleviating its pressure. We shall, for the present, only allude to the contrivance, alike clumsy and liable to great abuse, of associations for prosecuting felons, to which has lately been added in London an association for protecting trade from swindlers. The oppression often exercised by the former, their liability to be made the cover for jobs, or the engine of extirpating poachers, or the means of harassing poor men, in all cases their tendency to defeat the ends of justice by tarnish-

ing the purity of juries, need not be illustrated by either comments or instances. The injustice which may be wrought by the latter, we can best exemplify by stating, that it confines its operations to distributing printed circulars, in effect denouncing certain individuals as swindlers, who are named in a way apparently harmless, but, by a secret understanding, known to imply that charge. We are aware that this is a most useful society as the law now stands; and that it has exercised its functions almost always with entire correctness, and has seldom committed any mistakes; we are aware also that it seeks to give warnings of cases not always within the scope of any existing law, and some of which no public prosecutor could take up. But what we say is, that the law is most defective, if it leaves any one so unprotected against frauds as to justify a private tribunal in thus denouncing individuals untried and unheard; and it would be far better to amend the law, and appoint persons responsible for seeing it rigorously enforced; and then to leave individuals exposed to some little risk, unavoidable in all large communities.

We might give as another example of the evils complained of, the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Its prosecutions for what is called blasphemy, we entirely, and on grounds of a religious as well as political nature, disapprove. A public prosecutor would doubtless not venture to countenance many cases of this sort, which it must bring to trial, very possibly before juries, themselves members, or connected with members of the prosecuting body. But there is a class of cases, for the prosecution of which the whole community is deeply indebted to that Society, because they cry aloud for severe punishment, and yet no individual can be expected to stand forward as their prosecutor—we mean the sale of obscene books and pictures. It is the real service the Society has constantly rendered in checking the diffusion of such subtle poison, that makes good men lament the harm they occasionally do the cause both of religion and religious liberty: But they render this service only because the public officer is wanting who ought to do it, and who would do it without any of the evil now mixed with it by the private association. The other very different body, known by the name of the Bridge Street Gang, owed its rise to the same defect in the law; but became soon so notorious a job of certain greedy and profligate speculators, and carried on its operations with such a contempt of all fairness and equality, that it was speedily overwhelmed with public reprobation, and perished unpitied, though supported by the highest names among the aristocracy—in Church and State.

It needs hardly be added, that we are only the advocates of

such a change in the English law, as would *add* the office of Public Prosecutor to that of the Grand Jury, as at present constituted. His duty would merely consist in bringing cases, by himself or his deputies, before that ancient and constitutional tribunal, and in prosecuting them after the bills should be found. The increase of patronage thus occasioned would doubtless be a serious evil, but there might be means of checking its effects; and one very obvious set-off, if it could not be termed a diminution of the mischief, would be found in the relinquishment by the crown of the power to file *ex officio* informations in any case. Of this we are quite certain, that the greatest practical benefit which could be conferred on the criminal law of England, would be the addition of a Public Prosecutor to the Grand Jury, under proper restrictions; as one of the best gifts that our own jurisprudence could receive, would be the addition of a Grand Jury to our office of Public Prosecutor.

ART. VII. *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship, a Novel.* From the German of GOETHE. In 3 volumes 12mo. pp. 1030. Edinburgh, 1824.

THERE are few things that at first sight appear more capricious and unaccountable, than the diversities of National Taste; and yet there are not many, that, to a certain extent at least, admit of a clearer explanation. They form evidently a section in the great chapter of National Character; and, proceeding on the assumption, that human nature is everywhere fundamentally the same, it is not perhaps very difficult to indicate, in a general way, the circumstances which have distinguished it into so many local varieties.

These may be divided into two great classes,—the one embracing all that relates to the newness or antiquity of the society to which they belong, or, in other words, to the stage which any particular nation has attained in that great progress from rudeness to refinement, in which all are engaged;—the other comprehending what may be termed the accidental causes by which the character and condition of communities may be affected; such as their government, their relative position as to power and civilization to neighbouring countries, their prevailing occupations, determined in some degree by the capabilities of their soil and climate, and more than all perhaps, as to the question of Taste, the still more accidental circumstance of the character of their first models of excellence, or the kind of me-

rit by which their admiration and national vanity had first been excited.

It is needless to illustrate these obvious sources of peculiarity at any considerable length. It is not more certain, that all primitive communities proceed to civilization by nearly the same stages, than that the progress of taste is marked by corresponding gradations, and may, in most cases, be distinguished into periods, the order and succession of which is nearly as uniform and determined. If tribes of savage men always proceed, under ordinary circumstances, from the occupation of hunting to that of pasturage—from that to agriculture, and from that to commerce and manufactures, the sequence is scarcely less invariable in the history of letters and art. In the former, verse is uniformly antecedent to prose—marvellous legends to correct history—exaggerated sentiments to just representations of nature. Invention, in short, regularly comes before judgment, warmth of feeling before correct reasoning—and splendid declamation and broad humour before delicate simplicity or refined wit. In the arts again, the progress is strictly analogous—from mere monstrosity to ostentatious displays of labour and design, first in massive formality, and next in fantastical minuteness, variety, and flutter of parts;—and then, through the gradations of startling contrasts and overwrought expression, to the repose and simplicity of graceful nature.

These considerations alone explain much of that contrariety of taste by which different nations are distinguished. They not only start in the great career of improvement at different times, but they advance in it with different velocities—some lingering longer in one stage than another—some obstructed and some helped forward, by circumstances operating on them from within or from without. It is the unavoidable consequence, however, of their being in any one particular position, that they will judge of their own productions and those of their neighbours, according to that standard of taste which belongs to the place they then hold in this great circle;—and that a whole people will look on their neighbours with wonder and scorn, for admiring what their own grandfathers looked on with equal admiration,—while they themselves are scorned and vilified in return, for tastes which will infallibly be adopted by the grandchildren of those who despise them.

What we have termed the accidental causes of great differences in beings of the same nature, do not of course admit of quite so simple an exposition. But it is not in reality more difficult to prove their existence and explain their operation. Where great and degrading despotisms have been early esta-

blished, either by the aid of superstition or of mere force, as in most of the states of Asia, or where small tribes of mixed descent have been engaged in perpetual contention for freedom and superiority, as in ancient Greece—where the ambition and faculties of individuals have been chained up by the institution of castes and indelible separations, as in India and Egypt, or where all men practise all occupations and aspire to all honours, as in Germany or Britain,—where the sole occupation of the people has been war, as in infant Rome, or where a vast pacific population has been for ages inured to mechanical drudgery, as in China—it is needless to say, that very opposite notions of what conduces to delight and amusement must necessarily prevail; and that the Taste of the nation must be affected both by the sentiments which it has been taught to cultivate, and the capacities it has been led to unfold.

The influence of early models, however, is perhaps the most considerable of any; and may be easily enough understood. When men have been accustomed to any particular kind of excellence, they naturally become good judges of it, and account certain considerable degrees of it indispensable,—while they are comparatively blind to the merit of other good qualities to which they had been less habituated, and are neither offended by their absence, nor at all skilful in their estimation. Thus those nations who, like the English and Dutch, have been long accustomed to great cleanliness and order in their persons and dwellings, naturally look with admiration on the higher displays of those qualities, and are proportionally disgusted by their neglect; while they are apt to undervalue mere pomp and stateliness, when destitute of these recommendations: And thus also the Italians and Sicilians, bred in the midst of dirt and magnificence, are curiously alive to the beauties of architecture and sculpture, and make but little account of the more homely comforts which are so highly prized by the others. In the same way, if a few of the first successful adventurers in art should have excelled in any particular qualities, the taste of their nation will naturally be moulded on that standard—will regard those qualities almost exclusively as entitled to admiration, and will not only consider the want of them as fatal to all pretensions to excellence, but will unduly despise and undervalue other qualities, in themselves not less valuable, but with which their national models had not happened to make them timeously familiar. If, for example, the first popular writers in any country should have distinguished themselves by a pompous and severe regularity, and a certain elaborate simplicity of design and execution, it will na-

turally follow, that the national taste will not only become critical and rigorous as to those particulars, but will be proportionally deadened to the merit of vivacity, nature and invention, when combined with irregularity, homeliness, or confusion. While, if the great patriarchs of letters had excelled in variety and rapidity of invention, and boldness and truth of sentiment, though poured out with considerable disorder and incongruity of manner, these qualities would quickly come to be the national criterion of merit, and the correctness and decorum of the other school be despised, as mere recipes for monotony and tameness.

These, we think, are the plain and certain effects of the peculiar character of the first great popular writers of all countries. But still we do not conceive that they depend altogether on any thing so purely accidental as the temperament or early history of a few individuals. No doubt the national taste of France and of England would at this moment have been different, had *Shakespeare* been a Frenchman, and Boileau and Racine written in English. But then, we do not think that Shakespeare *could* have been a Frenchman; and we conceive that his character, and that of other original writers, though no doubt to be considered on the whole as casual, must yet have been modified to a great extent by the circumstances of the countries in which they were bred. It is plain that no original force of genius could have enabled Shakespeare to write as he has done, if he had been born and bred among the Chinese or the Peruvians. Neither do we think that he could have done so, in any other country but England—free, sociable, discursive, reformed, familiar England—whose motley and mingling population not only presented 'every 'change of many-coloured life' to his eye, but taught and permitted every class, from the highest to the lowest, to know and to estimate the feelings and the habits of all the others—and thus enabled the gifted observer not only to deduce the true character of human nature from this infinite variety of experiments and examples, but to speak, to the sense and the hearts of each, with that truly universal tongue, which every one feels to be peculiar, and all enjoy as common.

We have said enough however, or rather too much, on these general views of the subject—which in truth is sufficiently clear in those extreme cases, where the contrariety is great and universal, and is only perplexing when there is a pretty general conformity both in the causes which influence taste and in the results. Thus, we are not at all surprised to find the taste of the Japanese or the Iroquois very different from our own—and have no difficulty in both admitting that our human nature and human capacities

are substantially the same, and of referring this discrepancy to the contrast that exists in the whole state of society, and the knowledge, and the opposite qualities of the objects to which we have been respectively accustomed to give our admiration. That nations living in times or places altogether remote, should disagree in taste, as in every thing else, seems to us quite natural. They are only the nearer cases that puzzle. And, that great European countries, peopled by the same mixed races, educated in the admiration of the same classical models—venerating the same remains of antiquity—engaged substantially in the same occupations—communicating every day, on business, letters and society—bound up in short in one great commonwealth, as against the inferior and barbarous parts of the world, should yet differ so widely—not only as to the comparative excellence of their respective productions, but as to the constituents of excellence in all works of genius or skill, does indeed sound like a paradox, the solution of which every one may not be able to deduce from the preceding observations.

The great practical equation on which we in this country have been hitherto most frequently employed, has been between our own standard of taste and that which is recognised among our neighbours of France:—And certainly, though feelings of rivalry have somewhat aggravated its *apparent*, beyond its real amount, *there is* a great and substantial difference to be accounted for, in the way we have suggested—or in some other way. Stating that difference as generally as possible, we would say, that the French, compared with ourselves, are more sensitive to faults, and less transported with beauties—more enamoured of art, and less indulgent to nature—more charmed with overcoming difficulties, than with that power which makes us unconscious of their existence—more averse to strong emotions, or at least less covetous of them in their intensity—more students of Taste, in short, than adorers of Genius—and far more disposed than any other people, except perhaps the Chinese, to circumscribe the rules of Taste to such as they themselves have been able to practise, and to limit the legitimate empire of Genius to the provinces they have explored. There has been a good deal of discussion of late years, in the face of literary Europe, on these debatable grounds; and we cannot but think that the result has been favourable, on the whole, to the English, and that the French have been compelled to recede considerably from many of their exclusive pretensions—a result which we are inclined to ascribe, less to the arguments of our

native champions, than to those circumstances in the recent history of Europe, which have compelled our ingenious neighbours to mingle more than they had ever done before with the surrounding nations—and thus to become better acquainted with the diversified forms which genius and talent may assume.

But while we are thus fairly in the way of settling our differences with France, we are little more than beginning them, we fear, with Germany; and the perusal of the extraordinary volumes before us, which has suggested all the preceding reflections, has given us, at the same time, an impression of such radical, and apparently irreconcileable disagreement as to principles, as we can scarcely hope either to remove by our reasonings, or even very satisfactorily to account for by our suggestions.

This is allowed, by the general consent of all Germany, to be the very greatest work of their very greatest writer. The most original, the most varied and inventive,—the most characteristic, in short, of the author, and of his country. We receive it as such accordingly, with implicit faith and suitable respect; and have perused it in consequence with very great attention and no common curiosity. We have perused it, indeed, only in the translation of which we have prefixed the title: But it is a translation by a professed admirer, and by one who is proved by his Preface to be a person of talents, and by every part of the work to be no ordinary master, at least of one of the languages with which he has to deal. We need scarcely say, that we profess to judge of the work only according to our own principles of judgment and habits of feeling; and, meaning nothing less than to dictate to the readers or the critics of Germany what they should think of their own favourite authors, propose only to let them know, in all plainness and modesty, what we, and we really believe most of our countrymen, actually think of this *chef d'œuvre* of Teutonic genius.

We must say, then, at once, that we cannot enter into the spirit of this German idolatry; nor at all comprehend upon what grounds the work before us could ever be considered as an admirable, or even a commendable performance. To us it certainly appears, after the most deliberate consideration, to be eminently absurd, puerile, incongruous, vulgar, and affected;—and, though redeemed by considerable powers of invention, and some traits of vivacity, to be so far from perfection, as to be, almost from beginning to end, one flagrant offence against every principle of taste, and every just rule of composition. Though indicating, in many places, a mind capable both of acute and profound reflection, it is full of mere silliness and

childish affectation;—and though evidently the work of one who had seen and observed much, it is throughout altogether unnatural, and not so properly improbable, as affectedly fantastic and absurd—kept, as it were, studiously aloof from general or ordinary nature—never once bringing us into contact with real life or genuine character—and, where not occupied with the professional squabbles, paltry jargon, and scenical profligacy of strolling players, tumblers, and mummers (which may be said to form its staple), is conversant only with incomprehensible mystics and vulgar men of whim, with whom, if it were at all possible to understand them, it would be a baseness to be acquainted. Every thing, and every body we meet with, is a riddle and an oddity; and though the tissue of the story is sufficiently coarse, and the manners and sentiments infected with a strong tinge of vulgarity, it is all kept in the air, like a piece of machinery at the minor theatres, and never allowed to touch the solid ground, or to give an impression of reality, by the disclosure of known or living features. In the midst of all this, however, there are, every now and then, outbreakings of a fine speculation, and gleams of a warm and sprightly imagination—an occasional wild and exotic glow of fancy and poetry—a vigorous heaping up of incidents, and touches of bright and powerful description.

It is not very easy certainly to account for these incongruities, or to suggest an intelligible theory for so strange a practice. But in so far as we can guess, these peculiarities of German taste are to be referred, in part, to the comparative newness of original composition among that ingenious people, and to the state of European literature when they first ventured on the experiment—and in part to the state of society in that great country itself, and the comparatively humble condition of the greater part of those who write, or to whom writing is there addressed.

The Germans, though undoubtedly an imaginative and even enthusiastic race, had neglected their native literature for two hundred years—and were chiefly known for their learning and industry. They wrote huge Latin treatises on Law and Theology—and put forth bulky editions, and great tomes of annotations on the classics. At last, however, they grew tired of being respected as the learned drudges of Europe, and reproached with their consonants and commentators; and determined, about fifty years ago, to show what metal they were made of, and to give the world a taste of their quality, as men of genius and invention. In this attempt the first thing to be attended to was at all events to avoid the imputation of being scholastic imita-

tors of the classics. *That* would have smelt too much, they thought, of the old shop; and in order to prove their claims to originality, it was necessary to go a little into the opposite extreme,—to venture on something decidedly modern, and to show at once their independence on their old masters, and their superiority to the pedantic rules of antiquity. With this view some of them betook themselves to the French models—set seriously to study how to be gay—*apprendre à être vif*—and composed a variety of petites pieces, and novels of polite gallantry, in a style—of which we shall at present say nothing. This manner, however, ran too much counter to the general character of the nation to be very much followed—and undoubtedly the greater and better part of their writers turned rather to us, for hints and lessons to guide them in their ambitious career. There was a greater affinity in the temper and genius of the two nations—and our great authors were indisputably at once more original and less classical than those of France. England, however, we are sorry to say, could furnish abundance of bad as well as good models—and even the best were perilous enough for rash imitators. As it happened, however, the worst were most generally selected—and the worst parts of the good. Shakespeare was admired—but more for his flights of fancy, his daring improprieties, his trespasses on the borders of absurdity, than for the infinite sagacity and rectifying good sense by which he redeemed those extravagancies, or even the profound tenderness and simple pathos which alternated with the lofty soaring or dazzling imagery of his style. Altogether, however, Shakespeare was beyond their rivalry; and though Schiller has dared, and not ingloriously, to emulate his miracles, it was plainly to other merits and other rivalries that the body of his ingenious countrymen aspired. The ostentatious absurdity—the affected oddity—the pert familiarity—the broken style, and exaggerated sentiment of Tristram Shandy—the mawkish morality, dawdling details, and interminable agonies of Richardson—the vulgar adventures, and homely, though, at the same time, fantastical speculations of John Buncle and others of his forgotten class, found far more favour in their eyes. They were original, startling, unclassical, and puzzling. They excited curiosity by not being altogether intelligible—effectually excluded monotony by the rapidity and violence of their transitions, and promised to rouse the most torpid sensibility, by the violence and perseverance with which they thundered at the heart. They were the very things, accordingly, which the German originals were in search of;—and they were not slow, therefore, in adopting and improving on them. In order to make them

thoroughly their own, they had only to exaggerate their peculiarities—to mix up with them a certain allowance of their old visionary philosophy, misty metaphysics, and superstitious visions—and to introduce a few crazy sententious theorists, to sprinkle over the whole a seasoning of rash speculation on morality and the fine arts.

The style was also to be relieved by a variety of odd comparisons and unaccountable similes—borrowed, for the most part, from low and revolting objects, and, all the better, if they did not exactly fit the subject, or even introduced new perplexity into that which they professed to illustrate.

This goes far, we think, to explain the absurdity, incongruity, and affectation of the works of which we are speaking. But there is yet another distinguishing quality for which we have not accounted—and that is a peculiar kind of Vulgarity which pervades all their varieties, and constitutes, perhaps, their most repulsive characteristic. We do not know very well how to describe this unfortunate peculiarity, except by saying that it is the vulgarity of pacific, comfortable Burghers, occupied with stuffing, cooking, and providing for their coarse personal accommodations. There certainly never were any men of genius who condescended to attend so minutely to the *non-naturals* of their heroes and heroines as the novellists of modern Germany. Their works smell, as it were, of groceries—of brown papers filled with greasy cakes and slices of bacon,—and fryings in frowzy back parlours. All the interesting recollections of childhood turn on remembered tidbits and plunderings of savoury store-rooms. In the midst of their most passionate scenes there is always a serious and affectionate notice of the substantial pleasures of eating and drinking. The raptures of a tête-a-tête are not complete without a bottle of nice wine and a 'trim collation.' Their very sages deliver their oracles over a glass of punch; and the enchanted lover finds new apologies for his idolatry in taking a survey of his mistress's 'combs, soap, and towels, with the traces of their use.' These baser necessities of our nature, in short, which all other writers who have aimed at raising the imagination or touching the heart have kept studiously out of view, are ostentatiously brought forward, and fondly dwelt on by the pathetic authors of Germany.

We really cannot well account for this extraordinary taste. But we suspect it is owing to the importance that is really attached to those solid comforts and supplies of necessaries, by the greater part of the readers and writers of that country. Though there is a great deal of freedom in Germany, it operates less by raising the mass of the people to a potential equality with

the nobles, than by securing to them their inferior and plebeian privileges; and consists rather in the immunities of their incorporated tradesmen, which may enable them to become rich as such, than in any general participation of national rights, by which they may aspire to dignity and elegance, as well as opulence and comfort. Now, the writers, as well as the readers in that country, belong almost entirely to the plebeian and vulgar class. Their learned men are almost all wofully poor and dependent; and the comfortable burghers, who buy entertaining books by the thousand at the Frankfort fair, probably agree with their authors in nothing so much as the value they set on those homely comforts to which their ambition is mutually limited by their condition; and enter into no part of them so heartily as those which set forth their paramount and continual importance.

It is time, however, that we should proceed to give some more particular account of the work which has given occasion to all these observations. Nor indeed have we anything more of a general nature to premise, except that we really cannot join in the censure which we have found so generally bestowed on it for its alleged grossness and immorality. It is coarse, certainly, in its examples, and by no means very rigorous in its ethical precepts. But it is not worse in those respects than many works on which we pride ourselves at home—Tom Jones, for example, or Roderick Random. There are passages, no doubt, that would shock a delicate young lady; but to the bulk of male readers, for whom we suppose it was chiefly intended, we do not apprehend that it will either do any great harm, or give any great offence.

Wilhelm Meister is the son of a plodding merchant, in one of the middling towns of Germany, who, before he is out of his apprenticeship, takes a passion for play-going; which he very naturally follows up by engaging in an intrigue with a little pert actress, who performed young officers and other male parts with great success. The book opens with a supper at her lodgings; where he tells her a long silly story of his passion for puppet-shows in his childhood—how he stole a set of puppets out of a pantry of his mother's, into which he had slipped to filch sugar-plums—how he fitted up a puppet-show of his own, in a garret of his father's house, and enacted David and Goliah, to the wonder and delight of the whole family, and various complaisant neighbours, who condescended to enact audience—how a half-pay lieutenant assisted him in painting the figures and nailing up the boards—and how out of all this arose his early taste for playhouses and actresses.

This goodly stuff extends through fifty mortal pages—all serious, solemn and silly, far beyond the pitch of the worst gilt thing ever published by Mr Newberry. As this is one of the most characteristic parts of the work, we must verify the account we have ventured to give of it by a few extracts. Wilhelm is describing the dress of the prophet Samuel in his Punch's Opera of Goliah, and telling 'how the taffeta of the cassock had been taken from a gown of his grandmother's,' when a noise is heard in the street, and the old maid Barbara informs them that

'The disturbance arose from a set of jolly companions, who were just then sallying out of the Italian Tavern, hard by, where they had been busy discussing *fresh oysters,* a cargo of which had just arrived, and by no means sparing their champaign. "Pity," Mariana said, "that we did not think of it in time; we might have had some entertainment to ourselves." "It is not yet too late," said Wilhelm, giving Barbara a louis d'or: "get us what we want; then come and take a share with us." The old dame made speedy work; ere long a trimly-covered table, with a neat collation, stood before the lovers. They made Barbara sit with them; *they ate and drank,* and enjoyed themselves. On such occasions, there is never want of enough to say. Mariana soon took up little Jonathan again, and the old dame turned the conversation upon Wilhelm's favourite topic. "You were telling us," she said, "about the first exhibition of a puppet-show on Christmas-eve: I remember you were interrupted, just as the ballet was going to begin." "I assure you," said Wilhelm, "it went off quite well. And certainly the strange caperings of these Moors and Mooresses, these shepherds and shepherdesses, these dwarfs and dwarfesses, will never altogether leave my recollection while I live."' &c. &c.

We spare our readers some dozen pages of doll-dressing and joinery, and come to the following choice passage.

'"In well adjusted and regulated houses," continued Wilhelm, "children have a feeling not unlike what I conceive rats and mice to have; they keep a sharp eye on all crevices and holes, where they may come at *any forbidden dainty;* they enjoy it also with a fearful, stolen satisfaction, which forms no small part of the happiness of childhood. More than any other of the young ones, I was in the habit of looking out attentively to see if I could notice *any cupboard left open,* or key standing in its lock. The more reverence I bore in my heart for those closed doors, on the outside of which I had to pass by for weeks and months, catching only a furtive glance when our mother now and then opened the consecrated place to take something from it,—the quicker was I to make use of any opportunities which the forgetfulness of our housekeepers at times afforded me. Among all the doors, that of *the store-room* was, of course, the one I watched most narrowly. Few of the joyful anticipations in life can

equal the feeling which I used to have, when my mother happened to call me, that I might help her to carry out any thing, after which I might pick up a few dried plums, either with her kind permission, or by help of my own dexterity. The accumulated treasures of this chamber took hold of my imagination by their magnitude; the very fragrance exhaled by so multifarious a collection of sweet-smelling *spices* produced such a craving effect on me, that I never failed, when passing near, to linger for a little, and regale myself at least on the unbolted atmosphere. At length, one Sunday morning, my mother, being hurried by the ringing of the church-bells, forgot to take this precious key with her on shutting the door, and went away leaving all the house in a deep sabbath stillness. No sooner had I marked this oversight, than gliding softly once or twice to and from the place, I at last approached very gingerly, opened the door, and felt myself, after a single step, in immediate contact with these manifold and long-wished-for means of happiness. I glanced over *glasses*, *chests* and *bags*, and *drawers* and *boxes*, with a quick and doubtful eye, considering what I ought to take; turned finally to my dear withered plums, provided myself also with a few *dried apples*, and completed the forage with an orange-chip. I was quietly retreating with my plunder, when some little chests, lying piled over one another, caught my attention; the more so, as I noticed a wire, with hooks at the end of it, sticking through the joint of the lid in one of them. Full of eager hopes, I opened this singular package; and judge of my emotions, when I found my glad world of heroes all sleeping safe within! I meant to pick out the topmost, and, having examined them, to pull up those below; but in this attempt, the wires got very soon entangled, and I fell into a fright and flutter, more particularly as *the cook* just then began making some stir *in the kitchen, which lay close by*; so that I had nothing for it but to squeeze the whole together, the best way I could, and to shut the chest, having stolen from it nothing but a little written book, which happened to be lying above, and contained the whole drama of Goliath and David. With this booty I made good my retreat into the garret." ' pp. 20–22.

This, we suppose, will be received as a sufficient specimen of the true German taste for comfits, cooking, and cockering. If any one should wish for a sample of pure childishness, or mere folly, there are pages on pages like the following.

' " It was natural that the operas, with their manifold adventures and vicissitudes, should attract me more than any thing beside. In these compositions, I found stormy seas; gods descending in chariots of cloud; and, what most of all delighted me, abundance of thunder and lightning. I did my best with pasteboard, paint, and paper: I could make night very prettily; my lightning was fearful to behold; only my thunder did not always prosper, which however was of less importance. In operas, moreover, I found frequent opportunities of introducing my David and Goliath, persons whom the re-

gular drama would hardly admit. Daily I felt more attachment for the hampered spot where I enjoyed so many pleasures; and, I must confess, *the fragrance* which the puppets had acquired from *the store-room* added not a little to my satisfaction.

' " The decorations of my theatre were now in a tolerable state of completeness. I had always had the knack of drawing with compasses, and clipping pasteboard, and colouring figures; and here it served me in good stead. But the more sorry was I, on the other hand, when, as frequently happened, my stock of actors would not suffice for representing great affairs.—My sisters, dressing and undressing their dolls, awoke in me the project of furnishing my heroes by and by with garments, which might also be put off and on. Accordingly, I slit the scraps of cloth from off their bodies; tacked the fragments together as well as possible; saved a particle of money to buy new ribbons and lace; begged many a rag of taffeta; and so formed, by degrees, a full theatrical wardrobe, in which hoop-petticoats for the ladies were especially remembered.—My troop was now fairly provided with dresses for the most important piece, and you might have expected that henceforth one exhibition would follow close upon the heels of another. But it happened with me, as it often happens with children; they embrace wide plans, make mighty preparations, then a few trials, and the whole undertaken is abandoned. I was guilty of this fault." ' &c. &c.

But we must get on with our story. While he is lulling his little actress to sleep by these edifying discourses, and projecting to go on the stage along with her, our mercantile hero is suddenly sent off by his father, to collect debts from their country customers. The ingenious author, however, cannot possibly let him go, without presenting his readers with an elaborate character of the worthy old trader and his partner. Old Meister, it seems, had

' A peculiar inclination for magnificence, for whatever catches the eye and possesses at the same time real worth and durability. In his house, he would have all things solid and massive; his stores must be copious and rich, all his plate must be heavy, the furniture of his table must be costly. On the other hand, his guests were seldom invited; for *every dinner* was a festival, which, both for its expense and for its inconvenience, could not often be repeated. The economy of his house went on at a settled uniform rate, and every thing that moved or had a place in it was just what yielded no one any real enjoyment.

" The elder Werner, in his dark and hampered house, led quite another sort of life. The business of the day, in his narrow counting-rom, at his ancient desk, once done, Werner liked *to eat well*, and if possible *to drink better*. Nor could he fully enjoy *good things* in solitude; with his family he must always see at table, his friends and any stranger that had the slightest connexion with his house.

His chairs were of unknown age and antic fashion, but he daily invited some *to sit on them. The dainty victuals* arrested the attention of his guests, and none remarked that they were served up in common ware. His cellar held no great stock of wine; but the emptied niches were usually filled by more of a superior sort.' pp. 56, 57.

This must be admitted not to be the very best exemplification of the style noble. Nor is the outfit of the hero himself described in a vein more lofty.

"He must prepare," said Meister, "and set forth as soon as possible. Where shall we get a horse for him to suit this business?—We shall not seek far. The shopkeeper in H———, *who owes us somewhat*, but is withal a good man, has offered me a horse instead of payment. My son knows it, and tells me it is a serviceable beast. He may fetch it himself; let him go with the diligence; the day after to-morrow he is back again betimes; we have *his saddle-bags* and letters made ready in the meantime; he can set out Monday morning."

The following passage, however, is a fairer sample of the average merit of the work; and exhibits some traits of vivacity and eloquence, debased by that affectation of singularity, and that predominating and characteristic vulgarity, of which we have already said so much. He is describing his hero's hours of fascination, in the playhouse, and elsewhere.

'For hours he would stand by the sooty light-frame, inhaling the vapour of tallow lamps, looking out at his mistress; and when she returned and cast a kindly glance upon him, he could feel himself lost in ecstacy, and, though close upon laths and bare spars, he seemed transported into paradise. The stuffed bunches of wool denominated lambs, the water-falls of tin, the paper roses, and the one-sided huts of straw, awoke in him fair poetic visions of an old pastoral world. Nay, the very dancing girls, ugly as they were when seen at hand, did not always inspire him with disgust. They trod the same floor with Mariana. So true is it, that love, which alone can give their full charm to rose-bowers, myrtle-groves, and moonshine, can also communicate, even to shavings of wood and paper clippings, the aspect of animated nature. It is so *strong a spice*, that *tasteless*, or even *nauseous soups*, are by it rendered palatable!

'So potent a spice was certainly required to render tolerable, nay at last agreeable, the state in which he usually found her chamber, not to say herself.—Brought up in a substantial burgher's house, cleanliness and order were the element in which he breathed; and inheriting as he did a portion of his father's taste for finery, it had always been his care, in boyhood, to furbish up his chamber, which he regarded as his little kingdom, in the stateliest fashion. He had got himself a carpet for the middle of his chamber, and a finer one for his table. He had also a white cap, which he wore straight up like a turban! and the sleeves of his night-gown he had caused to

be cut short, in the mode of the Orientals. As a reason for this, he pretended, that long wide sleeves encumbered him in writing.

'In those times, how happy did he think the players, whom he saw possessed of so many splendid garments, trappings, and arms; and in the constant practice of a lofty demeanour, the spirit of which seemed to hold up a mirror of whatever, in the opinions, relations, and passions of men, was stateliest and most magnificent. Of a piece with this, thought Wilhelm, is also the player's domestic life; a series of dignified transactions and employments, whereof their appearance on the stage is but the outmost portion! Like as a mass of silver, long simmering about in the purifying furnace, at length gleams with a bright and beautiful tinge in the eye of the refiner, and shows him, at the same time, that the metal now is cleansed of all foreign mixture.

'Great, accordingly, was his surprise at first, when he found himself beside his mistress, and looked down, through the cloud that environed him, on tables, stools, and floor. The wrecks of a transient, light, and false decoration lay, like the glittering coat *of a skinned fish*, dispersed in wild disorder. The implements of personal cleanliness, combs, soap, *towels*, with *the traces of their use*, were not concealed. Music, portions of plays and pairs of shoes, washes and Italian flowers, pincushions, *hair-skewers*, *rouge-pots* and ribbons, books and straw-hats; no article despised the neighbourhood of another; all were united by a common element, powder and dust. Yet as Wilhelm scarcely noticed in her presence aught except herself; nay, as all that had belonged to her, that she had touched, was dear to him, he came at last to feel, in this chaotic housekeeping, a charm which the proud pomp of his own habitation never had communicated. When, on this hand, he lifted aside her boddice, to get at the harpsichord; on that, threw her gown upon the bed, that he might find a seat; when she herself, with careless freedom, did not seek to hide from him *many a natural office*, which, out of respect for the presence of a second person, is usually concealed; he felt as if by all this he was coming nearer to her every moment, as if the communion betwixt them was fastening by invisible ties!'

In the midst of all these raptures, and just after he had been gallantlyserenading her with the trumpets of a travelling showman, he detects his frail fair one in an intrigue with a rival; and falls into the most horrible agonies, the nature and violence of which the ingenious author illustrates by the following very obvious and dignified simile.

'As when by chance, in the preparation of *some artificial fireworks*, any part of the composition kindles before its time, and the skilfully bored and loaded barrels,—which, arranged, and burning after a settled plan, would have painted in the air a magnificently varying series of flaming images,—now hissing and roaring, promiscuously explode with a confused and dangerous crash; so, in our hero's case, did happiness and hope, pleasure and joys, realities and

dreams, clash together with destructive tumult, all at once in his bosom.'

He sets off, however, on his journey, and speedily gets into those theatrical connexions, from which he can scarcely be said to escape till the end of the work. Nothing, indeed, can be more ludicrously unnatural than the luck he has in meeting with nothing but players, and persons connected with playhouses. On his very first sally, he falls in with a player who had run away with a young lady, whom he had captivated from the stage—and has scarcely had time to admire the mountain scenery among which he was to pass his first evening, when he is surprised to learn that the work-people are about to act a play—the whole process of which is described with as solemn a tediousness as his own original puppet-show. In the first town to which he descends, he meets first with a seducing company of tumblers and rope-dancers, reinforced by the valuable addition of a *Strong Man;* and in half an hour after makes acquaintance with a gay and bewitching damsel—who sends across the street to beg a nosegay he has in his hands—and turns out, by the happiest accident in the world, to be a strolling actress, waiting there for the chance of employment. To give our readers an idea of the sort of descriptions with which the great writers in Germany now electrify their readers, we copy the following simple and impressive account of the procession of the tumbling party.

'Preceded by a drum, the manager advanced on horseback; he was followed by a female dancer mounted on a corresponding hack, and holding a child before her, all bedizened with ribbons and spangles. Next came the remainder of the troop on foot; some of them carrying children on their shoulders in dangerous postures, yet smoothly and lightly; among these the young, dark, black-haired figure again attracted Wilhelm's notice.—Pickleherring ran gaily up and down the crowding multitude, distributing his hand-bills with much practical fun; here smacking the lips of a girl, there breeching a boy, and awakening generally among the people an invincible desire to know more of him.—On the painted flags, the manifold science of the company was visibly delineated.'

The new actress, to whom he is introduced by another of the fraternity whom he had found at his inn, is named Philina; and her character is sketched and sustained throughout the book with far more talent than could be expected from any thing we have hitherto cited. She is gay, forward, graceful, false, and good-natured, with a daring and capricious pleasantry, which, if it often strikes as unnatural, is frequently original and effective. Her debut, however, we must say, is in the author's most characteristic manner.

' She came out from her room in a pair of *tight* little slippers *with high heels*, to give them welcome. She had thrown a black mantle over her, above a white negligee, not indeed superstitiously *clean*, but which, for that very reason, gave her a more frank and *domestic air*. Her short dress did not hide a pair of the prettiest feet and ancles in the world.—" You are welcome," she cried to Wilhelm, " and I thank you for your charming flowers." She led him into her chamber with the one hand, pressing the nosegay to her breast with the other. Being all seated, and got into a pleasant train of general talk, to which she had the art of giving a delightful turn, Laertes threw a handful of *gingerbread nuts* into her lap, and she immediately *began to eat them*.—" Look what a child this young gallant is!" she said: " He wants to persuade you that I am fond of such confectionary; and it is himself that cannot live without *licking his lips* over something of the kind."—" Let us confess," replied Laertes, " that, in this point, as in others, you and I go hand in hand. For example," he continued, " the weather is delightful today: what if we should take a drive into the country, and *eat our dinner* at the Mill?"—I. 143, 144.

Even at the mill they are fortunate enough to meet with a dramatic representation—some miners in the neighbourhood having, by great good luck, taken it into their heads to set forth the utility of their craft in a sort of recitative dispute with some unbelieving countrymen, and to sing through a part of Werner's Lectures on Mineralogy—upon which very natural and probable occurrence our apprentice comments, in this incredible manner.

' " In this little dialogue," said Wilhelm, when seated at table, " we have a lively proof how *useful* the theatre might be to all ranks; what advantage even *the State* might procure from it, if the occupations,—*trades*, and undertakings of men were all brought upon *the stage*; and presented on their praiseworthy side, in that point of view in which the State itself should honour and protect them. As matters stand, we exhibit only the ridiculous side of men.—Might it not be a worthy and pleasing task for a statesman to survey the natural and reciprocal influence of all classes on each other, and to guide some poet, gifted with sufficient humour, in such labours as these? In this way, I am persuaded, many very entertaining, both agreeable and *useful* pieces, might be executed."

Such is the true sublime of German speculation! and it is by writing such sheer nonsense as this that men in that country acquire the reputation of great genius—and of uniting with pleasant inventions the most profound suggestions of political wisdom! Can we be wrong in maintaining, after this, that there are diversities of national taste that can never be reconciled, and scarcely ever accounted for?

On another day they go in a boat, and agree, by way of pas-

time, 'to extemporise a Play,' by each taking an ideal charac-ter, and attempting to sustain it—and this, 'because it forces 'each to strain his fancy and his wit to the uttermost,' is pro-nounced to be a most 'comfortable occupation,'—and is thus moralized upon by a reverend clergyman who had joined their party, and enacted a country parson with great success.

' "I think this practice very useful among actors, and even in the company of friends and acquaintances. It is the best mode of draw-ing men out of themselves, and leading them, by a circuitous path, back into themselves again."

Their evening occupation is not less intellectual and drama-tic; though it ends, we must own, with rather too much ani-mation. They all meet to read a new play; and.

—'between the third and fourth act, *the punch* arrived, in an ample bowl; and there being much fighting and drinking in the piece it-self, nothing was more *natural* than that, on every such occurrence, the company should transport themselves into the situation of the heroes, should flourish and strike along with them, and *drink* long life to their favourites among the *dramatis personæ.*

'Each individual of the party was inflamed with the most noble fire of national spirit. How it gratified this German company to be poetically entertained, according to their own character, on stuff of their own manufacture! In particular, the vaults and caverns, the ruined castles, the moss and hollow trees; but above all the noctur-nal Gipsy-scenes, and the Secret Tribunal, produced a quite incredi-ble effect.

'Towards the fifth act the approbation became more impetuous and louder; and at last, when the hero actually trampled down his oppressor, and the tyrant met his doom, the ecstasy increased to such a height, that all averred they had never passed such happy moments. Melina, whom *the liquor* had inspired, was the noisiest; and when the second bowl was empty, and midnight near, Laertes swore through thick and thin, that no living mortal was worthy ever more to put these glasses to his lips; and, so swearing, he pitched his own right over his head, through a window-pane, out into the street. The rest followed his example; and notwithstanding the protestations of the landlord, who came running in at the noise, *the punch-bowl itself*, never after this festivity to be polluted by unholy drink, was dashed into a thousand shreds. Philina, whose exhilara-tion was the least noticed, the other two girls by that time having laid themselves upon the sofa in no very elegant positions, malicious-ly encouraged her companions in their tumult.

'Meanwhile the town-guard had arrived, and were demanding ad-mission to the house. Wilhelm, much heated by his reading, though he had drank but little, had enough to do with the landlord's help to content these people by money and good words, and afterwards to get the various members of his party sent home in that unseemly case.'

Most of our readers probably think they have had enough of this goodly matter. But we cannot spare them a taste of the manner of courtship and flirtation that prevailed among these merry people. Philina one day made a garland of flowers for her own hair—and then another, which she placed on the brows of our hero.

' "And I, it appears, must go empty!" said Laertes.—"Not by any means; you shall not have reason to complain," replied Philina, taking off the garland from her own head, and putting it on his.—"If we were rivals," said Laertes, "we might now dispute very warmly which of us stood higher in thy favour."—"And the more fools you," said she, while she bent herself towards him, and offered him *her lips to kiss;* and then immediately turned round, threw her arm about Wilhelm, and bestowed a kind salute on him also. "Which of them *tastes best?*" said she archly.—"Surprisingly!" exclaimed Laertes: "it seems as if nothing else had ever such a tang of wormwood in it."—"As little wormwood," she replied, "as any gift that a man may enjoy without envy and without conceit. But now," cried she, "I should like to have an hour's dancing, and after that we must look to our vaulters."

Another evening, as Wilhelm was sitting pensively on the bench at the inn door,

' Philina came singing and skipping along through the front door. She sat down by him; nay, we might almost say, *on* him, so close did she press herself towards him; she leant upon his shoulders, began playing with his hair, patted him, and gave him the best words in the world. She begged of him to stay with them, and not leave her alone in that company, or she must die of *ennui:* she could not live any longer in the same house with Melina, and had come over to lodge in the other inn for that very reason.—He tried in vain to satisfy her with denials; to make her understand that he neither could nor would remain any longer. She did not cease her entreaties; nay, suddenly she threw her arm about his neck, and *kissed him* with the liveliest expression of fondness.—"Are you mad, Philina?" cried Wilhelm, endeavouring to disengage himself; "to make *the open street* the scene of such caresses, which I nowise merit! Let me go; I cannot and I will not stay."—"And I will hold thee fast," said she, "and kiss thee here on the open street, and kiss thee till thou promise what I want. I shall die of laughing," she continued: "By this familiarity the good people here must take me for thy wife of four weeks standing; and husbands that witness this touching scene will commend me to their wives as a pattern of childlike simple tenderness."—Some persons were just then going by; she caressed him in the most graceful way; and he, to avoid giving scandal, was contrained to play the part of the patient husband. Then she made faces at the people, when their backs were turned; and, in the wildest humour, continued to commit all sorts of improprie-

ties, till at last he was obliged to promise that he would not go that day, or the morrow, or the next day.—"You are a true clod!" said she, quitting him; "and I am but a fool to spend so much kindness on you." I. 208, 209.

But we are tired of extracting so much trash, and must look out for something better. Would any one believe, that the same work which contains all these *platitudes* of vulgarity should have furnished our great Novellist with one of his most fantastical characters, and Lord Byron with one of the most beautiful passages in his poetry? Yet so it is. The character of Fenella, in Peveril of the Peak, is borrowed almost entire from the Mignon of the work before us—and the prelude to the Bride of Abydos, beginning, 'O knew you the land where the cypress and myrtle?' is taken, with no improvement, from a little wild air which she sings. It is introduced here, too, with more propriety and effect than in the work of the noble author; for she is represented as having been stolen from Italy; and the song, in this its original form, shadows out her desire to be restored to that delightful land and the stately halls of her ancestors,—retracing her way by the wild passes of the Alps. It is but fair to the poetical powers of Goethe to give this beautiful song, as it is here apparently, very ably translated.

'Know'st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom?
Where the gold orange glows in the deep thicket's gloom?
Where a wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My dearest and kindest, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the house, with its turretted walls,
Where the chambers are glancing, and vast are the halls?
Where the figures of marble look on me so mild,
As if thinking: "Why thus did they use thee, poor child?"
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My guide and my guardian, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the mountain, its cloud-covered arch,
Where the mules among mist o'er the wild torrent march?
In the clefts of it, dragons lie coil'd with their brood;
The rent crag rushes down, and above it the flood.
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
Our way leadeth: Father! O come let us go!" I. 220.

The mystery that hangs over the original condition of Fenella in Rushin Castle, is discarded, indeed, as to Mignon, from the

first; for she is first exhibited to us as *actually tumbling*—and is rescued by our hero from the scourge of the master tumbler, who was dissatisfied with her performance. But the *fonds* of the character is the same. She is beautiful and dwarfish, unaccountable, and full of sensibility, and is secretly in love with her protector, who feels for her nothing but common kindness and compassion. She comes at last, to be sure, to be rather more mad than Fenella, and dies the victim of her hopeless passion. The following is the description, something overworked perhaps, and not quite intelligible, but, on the whole, powerful and impressive, of this fairy creature's first indication of her love to her youthful deliverer.

'Nothing is more touching than the first disclosure of a love which has been nursed in silence, of a faith grown strong in secret, and which at last comes forth in the hour of need, and reveals itself to him who formerly has reckoned it of small account. The bud, which had been closed so long and firmly, was now ripe to burst its swathings, and Wilhelm's heart could never have been readier to welcome the impressions of affection.

'She stood before him, and noticed his disquietude. "Master! she cried, "if thou art unhappy, what will become of Mignon?" "Dear little creature," said he, taking her hands, "thou too are part of my anxieties. I must go." She looked at his eyes, glistening with restrained tears; and knelt down with vehemence before him. He kept her hands; she laid her head upon his knees, and remained quite still. He played with her hair, patted her, and spoke kindly to her. She continued motionless for a considerable time. At last he felt a sort of palpitating movement in her, which began very softly, and then by degrees with increasing violence diffused itself over all her frame. "What ails thee, Mignon?" cried he; "what ails thee?" She raised up her little head, looked at him, and all at once laid her hand upon her heart, with the countenance of one repressing the utterance of pain. He raised her up, and she fell upon his breast; he pressed her towards him, and kissed her. She replied not by any pressure of the hand, by any motion whatever. She held firmly against her heart; and all at once gave a cry, which was accompanied by spasmodic movements of the body. She started up, and immediately fell down before him, as if broken in every joint. It was an excruciating moment! "My child!" cried he, raising her up, and clasping her fast; "My child, what ails thee?" The palpitations continued, spreading from the heart over all the lax and powerless limbs; she was merely hanging in his arms! All at once she again became quite stiff, like one enduring the sharpest corporeal agony; and soon with a new vehemence all her frame once more became alive; and she threw herself about his neck, like a bent spring that is closing; while in her soul, as it were a strong rent took place, and at the same moment a stream of tears flowed from her shut eyes

into his bosom. He held her fast. She wept! and no tongue can express the force of these tears. Her long hair had loosened, and was hanging down before her; it seemed as if her whole being was melting incessantly into a brook of tears! Her rigid limbs were again become relaxed; her inmost soul was pouring itself forth! In the wild confusion of the moment, Wilhelm was afraid she would dissolve in his arms, and leave nothing there for him to grasp. He held her faster and faster. "My child!" cried he, "my child!" Her tears continued flowing. At last she raised herself; a faint gladness shone upon her face. "My father!" cried she, "thou wilt not forsake me? Wilt be my father? I am thy child.'

We cannot better illustrate the strange inconsistency of our author's manner, than by subjoining to this passionate scene his account of the *egg dance*, which this little creature performs a few days after, for her friend's entertainment.

'She came into his room one evening carrying a little carpet below her arm, which she then spread out upon the floor. She then brought four candles, and placed one upon each corner of the carpet. A little basket of eggs, which she next carried in, made her purpose clearer. Carefully measuring her steps, she then walked to and fro on the carpet, spreading out the eggs in certain figures and positions; which done, she called in a man that was waiting in the house, and could play on the violin. He retired with his instrument into a corner; she tied a band about her eyes, gave a signal, and, like a piece of wheel-work set a-going, she began moving the same instant as the music, accompanying her beats and the notes of the tune with the strokes of a pair of castanets.

'Lightly, nimbly, quickly, and with hairsbreadth accuracy, she carried on the dance. She skipped so sharply and surely along between the eggs, and trode so closely down beside them, that you would have thought every instant she must trample one of them in pieces, or kick the rest away in her rapid turns. By no means! She touched no one of them, though winding herself through their mazes with all kinds of steps, wide and narrow, nay even with leaps, and at last half kneeling.—Constant as the movement of a clock, she ran her course; and the strange music, at each repetition of the tune, gave a new impulse to the dance, recommencing and again rushing off as at first.

'The dance being ended, she rolled the eggs together softly with her foot into a little heap, left none behind, harmed none; then placed herself beside it, taking the bandage from her eyes, and concluding her performance with a little bow.'

Soon after this, the whole player party are taken to the castle of a wealthy Count, to assist him in entertaining a great Prince and his numerous attendants, from whom he was expecting a visit. Our hero is prevailed on to go also, and takes Mignon along with him—and though treated with some indig-

nity, and very ill lodged and attended, condescends to compose a complimentary piece in honour of the illustrious stranger, and to superintend, as well as to take a part in, all the private theatricals. By degrees, however, he steals into the favour of the more distinguished guests—is employed to read to the Countess, and at last is completely fascinated with her elegance and beauty—while, as it turns out, he has unconsciously made some impression on her innocent heart. He is not a little assisted in his designs, whatever they may have been, by a certain intriguing Baroness, who dresses him out, on one occasion, in the Count's clothes, when that worthy person was from home, intending to send the Countess in upon him, by telling her that her lord was suddenly returned. But this scheme is broken up by the unexpected verification of her fable; for the Count actually returns at the moment; and, on stepping into his dressing-room, is so much terrified at seeing *himself* sitting quietly in an arm-chair by the fire, that he runs out in a great fright, and soon after becomes a visionary, and joins the insane flock of Swedenborg. A critical scene, however, is at last brought on accidentally—and though the transaction recorded is by no means quite correct, we cannot help inserting the account of it, as a very favourable specimen of the author's most animated, and most natural style. Wilhelm had been engaged in reading, as usual, to the Countess and her female party, when they are interrupted by the approach of visitors. The Baroness goes out to receive them;

'And the Countess, while about to shut her writing-desk, which was standing open, took up her casket, and put some other rings upon her finger. "We are soon to part," said she, keeping her eyes upon the casket: "accept a memorial of a true friend, who wishes nothing more earnestly, than that you may always prosper." She then took out a ring, which, underneath a crystal, bore a little plate of woven hair, beautifully set with diamonds. She held it out to Wilhelm, who, on taking it, knew neither what to say nor do, but stood as if rooted to the ground. The Countess shut her desk, and sat down upon the sopha. "And I must go empty?" said Philina, kneeling down at the Countess's right hand. "Do but look at the man! he carries such a store of words in his mouth, when no one wants to hear them; and now he cannot stammer out the poorest syllable of thanks. Quick, sir! Express your services, by way of pantomime at least; and if to-day you can invent nothing; then, for Heaven's sake, be my imitator!" Philina seized the right hand of the Countess, and kissed it warmly. Wilhelm sank upon his knee, laid hold of the left, and pressed it to his lips. The Countess seemed embarrassed, yet without displeasure. "Ah!" cried Philina; "so much splendour of attire I may have seen before; but never

one so fit to wear it. What bracelets but also what a hand! What a neck-dress, but also what a bosom!" "Peace, little cozener!" said the Countess. "Is this his Lordship then?" said Philina, pointing to a rich medallion, which the Countess wore on her left side, by a particular chain. "He is painted in his bridal dress," replied the Countess. "Was he then so young?" inquired Philina; "I know it is but a year or two since you were married." "His youth must be placed to the artist's account," replied the lady. "He is a handsome man," observed Philina. "But was there never," she continued, placing her hand upon the Countess's heart, "never any other image that found its way in secret hither?" "Thou art very bold, Philina!" cried she; "I have spoiled thee. Let me never hear such another speech." "If you are angry, then am I unhappy," said Philina, springing up, and hastening from the room.

'Wilhelm still held that lovely hand in both of his. His eyes were fixed upon the bracelet-clasp; he noticed, with extreme surprise, that his initials were traced on it, in lines of brilliants. "Have I then," he modestly inquired, "your own hair in this precious ring?" "Yes," replied she in a faint voice; then suddenly collecting herself, she said, and pressed his hand: "Arise, and fare you well!" "Here is my name," cried he, "by the most curious chance!" He pointed to the bracelet-clasp. "How?" cried the Countess: "it is the cipher of a female friend!" "They are the initials of my name. Forget me not. Your image is engraven on my heart, and will never be effaced. Farewell! I must be gone." He kissed her hand, and meant to rise; but as in dreams, some strange thing fades and changes into something stranger, and the succeeding wonder takes us by surprise; so, without knowing how it happened, he found the Countess in his arms! Her lips were resting upon his, and their warm mutual kisses were yielding them that blessedness, which mortals sip from the topmost sparkling foam on the freshly poured cup of love!

'Her head lay upon his shoulder; the disordered ringlets and ruffles were forgotten. She had thrown her arm around him; he clasped her with vivacity; and pressed her again and again to his breast. O that such a moment could but last for ever! And wo to envious Fate that shortened even this brief moment to our friends! How terrified was Wilhelm, how astounded did he start from this happy dream, when the Countess, with a shriek, on a sudden tore herself away, and hastily pressed her hand against her heart. He stood confounded before her; she held the other hand upon her eyes, and, after a moment's pause, exclaimed: "Away! leave me! delay not!" He continued standing. "Leave me!" she cried; and taking off her hand from her eyes, she looked at him with an indescribable expression of countenance; and added, in the most tender and affecting voice: "Fly, if you love me." Wilhelm was out of

the chamber, and again in the room, before he knew what he was doing. Unhappy creatures! What singular warning of chance or of destiny tore them asunder?"

These questionable doings are followed up by long speculations on the art of playing, and the proper studies and exercises of actors. But in the end of these, which are mystical and prosing enough, we come suddenly upon what we do not hesitate to pronounce the most able, eloquent, and profound exposition of the character of Hamlet, as conceived by our great dramatist, that has ever been given to the world. In justice to the author, we shall give a part of this admirable critique. He first delineates him as he was before the calamities of his family.

'"Soft, and from a noble stem, this royal flower had sprung up under the immediate influences of majesty: the idea of moral rectitude with that of princely elevation, the feeling of the good and dignified with the consciousness of high birth, had in him been unfolded simultaneously. He was a Prince, by birth a prince; and he wished to reign, only that good men might be good without obstruction. Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth and the joy of the world.

'"Without any prominent passion, his love for Ophelia was a still presentiment of sweet wants. His zeal in knightly accomplishments was not entirely his own; it needed to be quickened and inflamed by praise bestowed on others for excelling in them. He was calm in his temper, artless in his conduct, neither pleased with idleness, nor too violently eager for employment. The routine of a university he seemed to continue when at court. He possessed more mirth of humour than of heart; he was a good companion, pliant, courteous, discreet, and able to forget and forgive an injury; yet never able to unite himself with those who overstept the limits of the right, the good, and the becoming.'

He then considers the effects of the misfortunes of his house on such a disposition. The first is the death of his father, by which his fair hopes of succession are disappointed.

'He is now poor in goods and favour, and a Stranger in the scene which from youth he had looked upon as his inheritance. His temper here assumes its first mournful tinge. He feels that now he is not more, that he is less, than a private nobleman; he offers himself as the servant of every one; he is not courteous and condescending, he is needy and degraded.

'"The second stroke that came upon him wounded deeper, bowed still more. It was the marriage of his mother. The faithful tender son had yet a mother, when his father passed away. He hoped, in the company of his surviving and noble-minded parent, to reverence the

heroic form of the departed; but his mother for he loses! and it is something worse than death that robs him of her. The trustful image, which a good child loves to form of his parents, is gone. With the dead there is no help—on the living no hold! She also is a woman, and her name is Frailty, like that of all her sex.

' " Figure to yourselves this youth," cried he, " this son of princes; conceive him vividly, bring his state before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks! Stand by him in the terrors of the night, when the venerable ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder passes over him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him; he follows it, and hears. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing oft-repeated prayer, Remember me!

' " And when the ghost has vanished, *who* is it that stands before us? A young Hero panting for vengeance? A Prince by birth, rejoicing to be called to punish the usurper of his crown? No! Trouble and astonishment take hold of the solitary young man: he grows bitter against smiling villains, swears that he will not forget the spirit, and concludes with the expressive ejaculation:

The time is out of joint: O! cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!

' " In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakspeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul *unfit* for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. An oak-tree is planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered! A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a Hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind." '

There is nothing so good as this in any of our own commentators—nothing at once so poetical, so feeling, and so just. It is inconceivable that it should have been written by the chronicler of puppet-shows and gluttonous vulgarities.

The players, with our hero at their head, now travel across the country, rehearsing, lecturing, squabbling and kissing as usual. There is war however on their track; and when seated pleasantly at dinner in a wood on their journey, they are attacked by some armed marauders, robbed of their goods, and poor Wilhelm left wounded and senseless on the field.

What follows, though not very original in conception, is described with some effect and vivacity.

'On again opening his eyes, he found himself in the strangest posture. The first thing that pierced the dimness which yet swam before his vision, was Philina's face bent down over his. He felt himself weak; and making a movement to rise, he discovered, that he was in Philina's lap; into which, indeed, he again sank down. She was sitting on the sward. She had softly pressed towards her the head of the fallen young man; and made for him an easy couch, as far as this was in her power. Mignon was kneeling with dishevelled and bloody hair at his feet, which she embraced with many tears. Philina let him know that this true-hearted creature, seeing her friend wounded, and in the hurry of the instant, being able to think of nothing which would staunch the blood, had taken her own hair that was flowing round her head, and tried to stop the wounds with it; but had soon been obliged to give up the vain attempt; that afterwards they had bound with moss and dry mushrooms, Philina herself giving up her neck-kerchief for that purpose.

'After a few moments, a young lady issued from the thickets, riding on a gray courser, and accompanied by an elderly gentleman and some cavaliers. Grooms, servants, and a troop of hussars, closed up the rear. Philina stared at this phenomenon, and was about to call, and entreat the Amazon for help; when the latter, turning her astonished eyes on the group, instantly checked her horse, rode up to them, and halted. She inquired eagerly about the wounded man, whose posture in the lap of this light-minded Samaritan seemed to strike her as peculiarly strange. "Is it your husband?" she inquired of Philina. "Only a friend," replied the other, with a tone that Wilhelm liked extremely ill. He had fixed his eyes upon the soft, elevated, calm, sympathizing features of the stranger: he thought he had never seen aught nobler or more lovely. Her shape he could not see: it was hid by a man's great-coat, which she seemed to have borrowed from some of her attendants, to screen her from the chill evening air.' II. 38–43.

A surgeon in this compassionate party examines his wounds, and the lovely young woman, after some time

—'turned to the old gentleman, and said, "Dear uncle, may I be generous at your expense?" She took off the great-coat, with the visible intention to give it to the stript and wounded youth.

'Wilhelm, whom the healing look of her eyes had hitherto held fixed, was now, as the surtout fell away, astonished at her lovely figure. She came near, and softly laid the coat above him. At this moment, as he tried to open his mouth, and stammer out some words of gratitude, the lively impression of her presence worked so strongly on his senses, already caught and bewildered, that all at once it appeared to him as if her head were encircled with rays; and a glancing

light seemed by degrees to spread itself over all her form! At this moment the surgeon, endeavouring to extract the ball from his wound, gave him a sharper twinge: the angel faded away from the eyes of the fainting patient: he lost all consciousness; and, on returning to himself, the horsemen and coaches, the fair one with her attendants, had vanished like a dream.

'He, meanwhile, wrapt up in his warm surtout, was lying peacefully upon the litter. An electric warmth seemed to flow from the fine wool into his body: in short, he felt himself in the most delightful frame of mind. The lovely being, whom this garment lately covered, had affected him to the very heart. He still saw the coat falling down from her shoulders; saw that noble form, begirt with radiance, stand beside him; and his soul hied over rocks and forests on the footsteps of his departed benefactress.' II. 45–47.

The party afterwards settles in a large town, under the charge of a regular manager. There are endless squabbles and intrigues, and interminable dissertations on acting. Our hero performs Hamlet with great applause, and gets tipsy with the whole company at a riotous supper after it—the rehearsals, the acting, and the said supper being all described with great spirit and animation. We may extract the end of the latter.

'Amid the pleasures of the entertainment, it had not been noticed that the children and the Harper were away. Ere long they made their entrance, and were blythely welcomed by the company. They came in together, very strangely decked: Felix was beating a triangle, Mignon a tambourine; the old man had his large harp hung round his neck, and was playing on it whilst he carried it before him. They marched round and round the table, and sang a multitude of songs. *Eatables* were handed to them; and the guests believed they could not do a greater kindness to the children, than by giving them as much *sweet wine* as they chose to drink.* For the company themselves had not by any means neglected a stock *of savoury flasks*, presented by the two amateurs, which had arrived this evening in baskets. The children tripped about and sang; Mignon in particular was frolicksome beyond what any one had ever seen her. She beat the tambourine with the greatest liveliness and grace: now, with her finger pressed against the parchment, she hummed across it quickly to and fro; now rattled on it with her knuckles, now with the back of her hand; nay sometimes, with alternating rhythm, she struck it first against her knee and then against her head; and anon twirling it in her hand, she made the shells jingle by themselves; and thus, from the simplest instrument, elicited a great variety of tones. The company, much as they had laughed at her at first, were in fine obliged to curb her. But persuasion was of small avail; for she now sprang up, and raved, and shook her tambourine, and capered round the table. With her hair flying out be-

hind her, with her head thrown back, and her limbs as it were cast into the air, she seemed like one of those antique Mænades, whose wild and all but impossible positions still strike us with astonishment when seen on classic monuments, &c.

'It was late; and Aurelia, perhaps the only one retaining self-possession in the party, now stood up, and signified that it was time to go. By way of termination, Serlo gave a firework, or what resembled one; for he could imitate the sound of crackers, rockets, and fire-wheels with his mouth, in a style of nearly inconceivable correctness. You had only to shut your eyes, and the deception was complete. On reaching the open air, almost all of them observed that *they had drank too liberally*. They glided asunder without taking leave.

'The instant Wilhelm gained his room, he stripped, and extinguishing his candle, hastened into bed. Sleep was overpowering him without delay, when a noise, that seemed to issue from behind the stove, aroused him. In the eye of his heated fancy, the image of the harnessed King was hovering near him: he sat up that he might address the Spectre; but he felt himself encircled with soft arms, and his mouth was shut with kisses, which he had not force to push away!' II. 205–209.

In this division of the story we hear a great deal of an Aurelia—a sister of the manager's—an actress of course—but a woman of talent and sentiment—who had been perfidiously left by her lover—and confided all the bitterness of her heart to our hero. There is a good deal of eloquence in some of these dialogues—and a nearer approach to nature, than in any other part of the work. This is a sample of them.

' " 'One more forsaken woman in the world!' you will say. You are a man. You are thinking: 'What a noise she makes, the fool, about a necessary evil, which certainly as death awaits women when such is the fidelity of men!' O my friend! if my fate were common, I would gladly undergo a common evil. But it is so singular: why cannot I present it to you in a mirror, why not command some one to tell it you? O had I, had I been seduced, surprised, and afterwards forsaken! there would then be comfort in despair: but I am far more miserable; I have been my own deceiver; I have wittingly betrayed myself; and this, this is what shall never be forgiven me." '

'I hate the French language,' she added, 'from the bottom of my soul. During the period of our kindliest connexion, he wrote in German, and what genuine, powerful, cordial German! It was not till he wanted to get quit of me, that he began seriously to write in French. I marked, I felt what he meant. What he would have blushed to utter in his mother tongue, he could by this means write with a quiet conscience. It is the language of reservations, equivocations, and lies: it is a *perfidious* language! Heaven be praised!

I cannot find another word to express this *perfide* of theirs in all its compass. Our poor *treulos*, the *faithless* of the English, are innocent as babes beside it. *Perfide* means faithless with enjoyment, with insolence and malice. How enviable is the culture of a nation that can figure out so many shades of meaning by a single word! French is exactly the language of the world; worthy to become the universal language, that all may have it in their power to cheat, and cozen, and betray each other! His French letters were always smooth and pleasant while you read them. If you chose to believe it, they sounded warmly, even passionately: but if you examined narrowly, they were but phrases, accursed phrases! He has spoiled my feeling to the whole language, to French literature, even to the beautiful delicious expressions of noble souls which may be found in it. I shudder when a French word is spoken in my hearing."'

What follows is still more in the raving style—and we suppose is much more admired in Germany.

'She sunk in thought; then, after a brief pause, she exclaimed with violence: You are accustomed to have all things fly into your arms. No, you cannot feel; no *man* is in a case to feel the worth of a woman that can reverence herself. By all the holy angels, by all the images of blessedness, which a pure and kindly heart creates, there is not anything more heavenly than the soul of a woman that gives herself to the man she loves! "We are cold, proud, high, clear-sighted, wise, while we deserve the name of women; and all these qualities we lay down at your feet, the instant that we love, that we hope to excite a return of love. Oh! how have I cast away my entire existence wittingly and willingly! But now will I despair, purposely despair. There is no drop of blood within me but shall suffer, no fibre that I will not punish. Smile, I pray you; laugh at this theatrical display of passion."

'Wilhelm was far enough from any tendency to laugh. This horrible, half-natural, half-factitious condition of his friend afflicted him but too deeply. She looked him intently in the face, and asked: "Can you say that you never yet betrayed a woman, that you never tried with thoughtless gallantry, with false asseverations, with cajoling oaths, to wheedle favour from her?" "I can," said Wilhelm, "and indeed without much vanity; my life has been so simple and sequestered, I have had but few enticements to attempt such things. And what a warning, my beautiful, my noble friend, is this melancholy state in which I see you! Accept of me a vow, which is suited to my heart, &c.; no woman shall receive an acknowledgment of love from my lips, to whom I cannot consecrate my life!" She looked at him with a wild indifference; and drew back some steps as he offered her his hand. "'Tis of no moment!" cried she: "so many women's tears more or fewer! the ocean will not swell by reason of them! And yet," continued she, "among thousands

one woman saved! that still is something: among thousands one honest man discovered; this is not to be refused. Do you know then what you promise?" "I know it," answered Wilhelm with a smile, and holding out his hand. "I accept it then," said she, and made a movement with her right hand, as if meaning to take hold of his: but instantly she darted it into her pocket, pulled out her dagger quick as lightning, and scored with the edge and point of it across his hand! He hastily drew back his arm, but the blood was already running down.

"One must mark you men rather sharply, if one means you to take heed," cried she with a wild mirth, which soon passed into a quick assiduity. She took her handkerchief, and bound his hand with it to staunch the fast-flowing blood. "Forgive a half-crazed being," cried she, "and regret not these few drops of blood. I am appeased, I am again myself. On my knees will I crave your pardon: leave me the comfort of healing you." II. 128–132.

Alternating with these agonies, we have many such scenes as the following.

'"'Tis a pity, I declare," Said Serlo to Philina, "that we have no ballet; else I would make you dance me a *pas de deux* with your first, and another with your second husband: the Harper might be lulled to sleep by the measure; and your bits of feet and ancles would look so pretty, tripping to and fro upon the side stage." "Of my ancles you do not know much," replied she snappishly; "and as to my bits of feet," cried she, hastily reaching below the table, *pulling off her slippers*, and holding them out to Serlo; "here are the cases of them, and I give you leave to find me nicer ones." "It were a serious task," said he, looking at the elegant half-shoes. "In truth, one does not often meet with any thing so dainty." They were of Parisian workmanship; Philina had obtained them as a present from the Countess, a lady whose foot was celebrated for its beauty. "A charming thing!" cried Serlo; "my heart leaps at the sight of them." "What gallant throbs!" replied Philina. "There is nothing in the world beyond a pair of slippers," said he; "of such pretty manufacture, in their proper time and place ——" Philina took her slippers from his hands, crying, "You have squeezed them all! They are far too wide for me!" She played with them, and rubbed the soles of them together. "How hot it is!" cried she, clapping the sole upon her cheek, then again rubbing, and holding it to Serlo. He was innocent enough to stretch out his hand to feel the warmth. "Clip! clap!" cried she, giving him a smart rap over the knuckles with the heel, that he screamed and drew back his hand; "I will teach you how to use my slippers better." "And I will teach you also how to use old folk like children," cried the other; then sprang up, seized her, and plundered many a kiss, every one of which she artfully contested with a shew of serious reluctance. In this romping, her long hair got loose, and

floated round the group; *the chair overset;* and Aurelia, inwardly indignant at such rioting, arose in great vexation.' II. 166-167.

This said Aurelia has a little boy called Felix—and dying at last of her sorrow, leaves a letter for her betrayer, which she had engaged our hero to deliver to him in person. But between the giving and execution of this mandate, the ingenious author has interpolated a separate piece, which he has entitled 'the confessions of a fair Saint'—and which has no other apparent connexion with the story, than that poor Aurelia's physician had lent it to her to read in her last moments. Though eminently characteristic of the author; it need not detain us long. The first part is full of vulgarity and obscurity—the last absolutely unintelligible. This fair saint lived in her youth among a set of people whom she calls German courtiers, and says, with singular delicacy,

'I look upon it as a providential guidance, that none of these many handsome, rich, and well-dressed men could take my fancy. They were rakes, and did not hide it; this scared me back: their speech was frequently adorned with double meanings; this offended me, and made me act with coldness towards them. Many times their improprieties surpassed belief; and I did not prevent myself from being rude. '*Besides*, my ancient counsellor had once in confidence contrived to tell me, that, with the greater part of these lewd fellows, *health* as well as virtue was in danger! I now shuddered at the sight of them; I was afraid, if one of them in any way approached too near me. I would not touch their cups or glasses, even the chairs they had been sitting on. Thus morally and physically I remained apart from them.'

She then falls in love with a certain Narciss, with whom her first acquaintance was formed at a ball, where, 'after having 'jigged it for a while in the crowd, he came into the room 'where I was, in consequence of *a bleeding at the nose*, with 'which he had been overtaken, and began to speak about a 'multitude of things!' In spite of this promising beginning, however, the mutual flame is not caught till they meet again at a dinner, where,

'Even at table, we had many things to suffer; for several of the gentlemen *had drank too much:* and after rising from it, they insisted on a game at *forfeits*. It went on with great vivacity and tumult. Narciss had lost a forfeit: they ordered him, by way of penalty, to whisper something pleasant in the ear of every member of the company. It seems, he staid too long beside my neighbour, the lady of a Captain. The latter on a sudden struck him such a *box with his fist*, that the powder flew about my eyes and blinded me! When I had cleared my sight, and in some degree recovered from my terror,

I saw that both of them had drawn their swords. Narciss was bleeding; and the other, mad with wine, and rage, and jealousy, could scarcely be held back by all the company: I seized Narciss, led him by the arm up stairs; and as I did not think my friend even here in safety from his frantic enemy, I shut the door and bolted it.'

After this they are soon betrothed; but she grows Methodistical, and he cold,—and their engagement flies off;—And then she becomes pious in good earnest, and is by turns a *Hallean* and a *Herrnhuther*, and we do not know how many other things, and raves through seventy or eighty pages, of which we have not courage to attempt any analysis.

We now get rid in a great degree of plays and players, and emerge into the region of mysticism. Wilhelm goes to the country to deliver Aurelia's letter to Lothario; but finds that worthy Baron so busy preparing to fight a duel, that he cannot find an opportunity to discharge himself of his mission. He remains, however, in the Castle, and soon finds himself in the midst of several peremptory and omniscient people, who make what they please of him. In discourse, they happen to make mention of a certain Count, a brother-in-law of Lothario's, who had grown melancholy, and talked of joining the Herrnhuthers, with his beautiful wife. Wilhelm immediately inquires what Count they are speaking of.

'"One whom you know very well," said Jarno. "You yourself are the ghost that have chased the unhappy wiseacre into piety; you are the villain who have brought his pretty wife to such a state, that she inclines accompanying him." "And she is Lothario's sister?" cried our friend. "No other!"—"And Lothario knows—?" "The whole." "O let me fly!" cried Wilhelm: "How shall I appear before him? What can he say to me?" "That no man should cast a stone at his brother; that when one composes long speeches, with a view to shame his neighbours, he should speak them to a looking-glass." "Do you know that also?" "And many things beside," said Jarno with a smile.'

From this moment our hero gives up the idea of reproaching the Baron with his perfidy to Aurelia, and offers his services to decoy away from him another love-sick damsel who is then in the house, and whose hysterics, it is thought, might retard the cure of the wound he has just received in his duel. He takes her away, accordingly, under some false pretext, to a certain Theresa, another deserted love of Lothario, and who is distinguished by a singular passion for housekeeping and all manner of economical employments. The conception of this character, which is dwelt on at great length, is one of the most glaring absurdities and affectations in the book. The author

has actually endeavoured, in serious earnest, to exalt the common qualifications of a domestic drudge, or notable housewife, into heroic virtues, and to elaborate his favourite heroine out of these base materials. The whole scene is tinged, even beyond the average standard of the book, with the apparently opposite faults of vulgarity and extravagance. This is the debut.

'She entered Wilhelm's room, inquiring if he wanted any thing. "Pardon me," said she, "for having lodged you in a chamber, which *the smell of paint* still renders disagreeable: my little dwelling is but just made ready; you are handselling this room, which is appointed for my guests; also, you will have many things to pardon. My *cook has run away* from me, at this unseasonable time; and a serving-man has bruised his hand. I might be forced to manage all myself; and if it were so, we must just put up with it. One is plagued with nobody so much as with one's servants: not one of them will serve you, scarcely even serve himself." She said a good deal more on different matters: in general she seemed to like to speak.'

They then take a walk together, and, on their return,

'Wilhelm testified his admiration at her skill in husbandry concerns. "Decided inclination, early opportunity, external impulse, and continued occupation in a useful business," said she, "make many things, which were at first far harder, possible in life." 'On returning home, she sent him to her little garden. Here he scarce could turn himself, so narrow were the walks, so thickly was it sown and planted. On looking over to the court, he could not keep from smiling: the *firewood* was lying there, as accurately sawed, split, and piled, as if it had been part of the building, and had been intended to abide there constantly. The *tubs* and implements, all clean, were standing in their places: the house was *painted white and red*; it was *really pleasant* to behold! Whatever can be done by handicraft, that knows not beautiful proportions, but that labours for convenience, cheerfulness, and durability, appeared united on the spot.'

She then puts on men's clothes, which she generally wore as most handy, and they have another walk, in the course of which she tells him her story. She was nobly born. But

'"From my earliest youth, *the kitchen*, the store-room, the granaries, the field, were my selected element! Cleanliness and order in the house, seemed, even while I was playing in it, to be my peculiar instinct, my peculiar object. This tendency gave pleasure to my father; and he by degrees afforded it the most suitable employment. When we were by ourselves, when walking through the fields, when I was helping to examine his accounts, I could perceive what happiness he was enjoying.

Her mother took great delight in a private theatre—'But I' she observed, 'very seldom staid among the audience; how-

'ever, *I always snuffed their candles*, and *prepared the supper*,—
'and put the wardrobe in order.' After her father's death her mother wastes the property, and she goes as a kind of steward or manager, into the family of a neighbouring lady, whom 'she faithfully assisted in *struggling* with her steward and do-'mestics.

' "I am neither of a niggardly nor grudging temper; but we women are accustomed to insist, more earnestly than men, that *nothing shall be wasted.* Embezzlement of all sorts is intolerable to us. Here I was in my element once more." '

This is enough we suppose, for the character of Theresa. But the accomplished Lothario falls in love with this angel, and here are the grounds, on which he justifies his preference.

' "What is the highest happiness of mortals, if not to execute what we consider right and good; to be really masters of the means conducive to our aims? And where should or can our first and nearest aims be but *within the house?* All those indispensable, and still to be renewed *supplies*, where do we expect, do we require to find them, if it is not in the place where we arise and where we go to sleep, where *kitchen* and *cellar*, and every species of accommodation for ourselves and ours is to be always ready? What unvarying activity is needed to conduct this constantly recurring series in unbroken living order! It is when a woman has attained this inward mastery, that she truly makes the husband whom she loves a master: her attention will acquire all sorts of knowledge for her; her activity will turn them all to profit. Thus is she dependent upon no one; and she procures her husband genuine independence, that which is interior and domestic: whatever he possesses he beholds secured; what he earns, well employed," &c.

They are engaged accordingly to be married; but the match is broken off by an unlucky discovery, that this gay Lothario had formerly had a love affair with Theresa's mother, when she was travelling abroad under a feigned name! We are rather surprised, we confess, at the notable fair one's delicacy, in considering this as a bar to their union—for her notions on the subject of conjugal fidelity must be owned to be sufficiently liberal, having intimated, in reference to her lover's subsequent intrigues with Aurelia and others, that

'Even if he had been her husband, she would have had sufficient spirit to endure a matter of this kind, if *it had not troubled her domestic order*: at least she often used to say, that a wife, who properly conducted her economy, should take no umbrage at *such little fancies of her husband*, but be always certain that he would return.'

Our hero returns to the castle quite enchanted with this paragon of women—and his rising flame is fed by the conversa-

tion which takes place with regard to her. After amusing themselves with each telling confidentially their pretty love adventures, the accomplished Lothario holds forth in this edifying and decided manner.

'"It is true," observed Lothario, "there can scarcely any feeling in the world be more agreeable, than when the heart, after a pause of indifference, again opens to love for some *new* object. Yet I would for ever have renounced *that* happiness, had fate been pleased to unite me with Theresa. What a heaven had I figured for myself beside Theresa! Not the heaven of an enthusiastic bliss; but of a *sure* life on earth: *order* in prosperity, courage in adversity, *care* for the smallest, and a spirit capable of comprehending and *managing* the greatest. You may well forgive me," added he, and turned to Wilhelm with a smile, "that I forsook Aurelia for Theresa: with the one I could expect a calm and cheerful life, with the other not a happy hour." "I will confess," said Wilhelm, "that in coming hither, I had no small anger in my heart against you; that I proposed to censure with severity your conduct to Aurelia." "It was really censurable," said Lothario: "I should not have exchanged my friendship for her with the sentiment of love; I should not, in place of the respect which she deserved, have intruded an attachment she was neither calculated to excite nor maintain. Alas! *she was not lovely when she loved!* the greatest misery which can befal a woman."

And in this cavalier manner is the subject dismissed. He denies, however, that Felix is his child, or Aurelia's either. And avers that he was brought to her by the old woman Barbara, by whom the boy was generally attended. On this hint Wilhelm flies back to the town, finds out Barbara, in whom he at length recognises the attendant of his first love Mariana, and learns from her that the boy Felix is the offspring of their early connexion, and that the unhappy mother died in consequence of his desertion, not only heart-broken but innocent! He is long incredulous, and appoints the ancient crone to come to him again at night, and abide all his interrogations.—The scene which follows, we think, is very powerfully executed, and is the only part almost of the book which produces anything of a pathetic effect.

'Midnight was past, when something rustled at the half-open door, and Barbara came in with a little basket. "I am to tell you the story of our woes," said she; "and I must believe that you will sit unmoved at the recital; that you are waiting for me but to satisfy your curiosity; that you will now, as you did formerly, retire within your cold selfishness, while our hearts are breaking. But look you here! *Thus*, on that happy evening, did I bring you the bottle of champaign! *thus* did I place the three glasses on the table! and as you then began,

with soft nursery tales, to cozen us and lull us asleep, so will I now with stern truths instruct you and keep you waking."

'Wilhelm knew not what to say, when the crone in fact let go the cork, and filled three glasses to the brim. "Drink!" cried she, having emptied at a draught her foaming glass. "Drink, ere the spirit of it pass! This third glass shall froth away untasted, to the memory of my unhappy Mariana! How red were her lips, when she *then* drank your health! Ah! and now forever pale and cold!" "Sibyl! Fury!" Wilhelm cried, springing up, and striking the table with his fist." "Softly, Mein Herr!" replied the crone; "you shall not ruffle me. Your debts to us are deep and dark: the railing of a debtor does not anger one. But you are right: the simplest narrative will punish you sufficiently. Hear then the struggle and the victory of Mariana striving to continue yours."'

She then tells a long story, explaining away the indications of perfidy, on the strength of which he had quitted her; and the scene ends in this very dramatic and truly touching manner.

"Good, dear Barbara!" cried Wilhelm, springing up, and seizing the old woman by the hand, "we have had enough of mummery and preparation! Thy indifferent, thy calm, contented tone betrays thee. Give me back my Mariana! She is living! she is near at hand! Not in vain didst thou choose this late lonely hour to visit me; not in vain hast thou prepared me by thy most delicious narrative. Where is she? where hast thou hid her? I believe all, I will promise to believe all. Thy object is attained. Where hast thou hid her? Let me light thee with this candle,—let me once more see her fair and kindly face!"

'He had pulled old Barbara from her chair: she stared at him; tears started to her eyes; wild pangs of grief took hold of her. "What luckless error," cried she, "leaves you still a moment's hope? Yes, I have hidden her—but beneath the ground! neither the light of the sun nor any social taper shall again illuminate her kindly face. Take the boy Felix to her grave, and say to him: 'There lies thy mother, whom thy father doomed unheard.' The heart of Mariana beats no longer with impatience to behold you. Not in a neighbouring chamber is she waiting the conclusion of my narrative, or fable; the dark chamber has received her, to which no bridegroom follows, from which none comes to meet a lover." She cast herself upon the floor beside a chair, and wept bitterly.'

She then shows him some of the poor girl's letters, which he had refused to receive, and another which she had addressed to him on her deathbed. One of the former is as follows.

"Thou regardest me as guilty—and so I am; but not as thou thinkest. Come to me! It involves the safety of a soul, it involves a life, two lives, one of which must ever be dear to thee. This, too, thy suspicion will discredit; yet I will speak it in the hour

of death: the child, which I carry underneath my heart, is thine. Since I began to love thee, no other man has even pressed my hand: O that thy love, that thy uprightness, had been the companions of my youth!"

After this he sends the boy and Mignon to his new love Theresa, and goes back himself to Lothario, by whom, and his energetic friends, the touching tale he had to tell 'is treated with indifference and levity.' And now comes the mystery of mysteries. After a great deal of oracular talk, he is ordered, one morning at sunrise, to proceed to a part of the castle to which he had never before found access; and when he gets to the end of a dark hot passage, he hears a voice call 'Enter!' and he lifts a tapestry, and enters!—

'The hall, in which he now stood, appeared to have at one time been a chapel; instead of the altar he observed a large table raised some steps above the floor, and covered with a green cloth hanging over it. On the top of this, a drawn curtain seemed as if it hid a picture; on the sides were spaces beautifully worked, and covered in with fine wire netting, like the shelves of a library; only here, instead of books, a multitude of rolls had been inserted. Nobody was in the hall. The rising sun shone through the window, right on Wilhelm, and kindly saluted him as he came in.

'Be seated!" cried a voice, which seemed to issue from the altar. Whilhelm placed himself in a small arm-chair, which stood against the tapestry where he had entered. There was no seat but this in the room; Wilhelm was obliged to take it, though the morning radiance dazzled him; the chair stood fast, he could only keep his hand before his eyes.

'But now the curtain, which hung down above the altar, went asunder with a gentle rustling; and showed, within a picture frame, a dark empty aperture. A man stept forward at it, in a common dress; saluted the astonished looker-on, and said to him: "Do you not recognise me?'

We have not room, however, for the detail of all this mummery. A succession of figures, known and unknown, present themselves;—among others, the ghost of Hamlet. At last, after a pause,

'The Abbé came to view, and placed himself behind the green table. "Come hither!" cried he to his marvelling friend. He went, and mounted up the steps. On the green cloth lay a little roll. "Here is your *Indenture*," said the Abbé; "take it to heart; it is of weighty import." Wilhelm lifted, opened it, and read:

'Indenture.—

'Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, occasion transient. To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. Every beginning is cheerful; the threshold is the

place of expectation. The boy stands astonished, his impressions guide him; he learns sportfully, seriousness comes on him by surprise. Imitation is born with us; what should be imitated is not easy to discover. The excellent is rarely found, more rarely valued. The height charms us, the steps to it do not; with the summit in our eye, we love to walk along the plain. It is but a part of art that can be taught; the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much and is always wrong; who knows it wholly, inclines to act, and speaks seldom or late. The former have no secrets and no force; the instruction they can give is like baked bread, savoury and satisfying for a single day; but flour cannot be sown, and seed corn ought not to be ground. Words are good, but they are not the best. The best is not to be explained by words. The spirit in which we act is the highest matter. Action can be understood and again represented by the spirit alone. No one knows what he is doing, while he acts rightly; but of what is wrong we are always conscious. Whoever works with symbols only, is a pedant, a hypocrite, or a bungler. There are many such, and they like to be together. Their babbling detains the scholar; their obstinate mediocrity vexes even the best. The instruction, which the true artist gives us, opens up the mind; for where words fail him, deeds speak. The true scholar learns from the known to unfold the unknown, and approaches more and more to being a master.

' "Enough!" cried the Abbé; "the rest in due time. Now, look round you among these cases."

' Wilhelm went and read the titles of the rolls. With astonishment, he found *Lothario's Apprenticeship*, *Jarno's Apprenticeship*, and his own *Apprenticeship* placed there, with many others whose names he did not know. "May I hope to cast a look into these rolls?" "In this chamber, there is now nothing hid from you." "May I put a question?" "Ask not," said the Abbé. "Hail to thee, young man! Thy Apprenticeship is done; Nature has pronounced thee free." '

When he afterwards inspects this roll, he finds ' his whole ' life delineated with large, sharp strokes, and a number of bland ' and general reflections. '

After this illumination, the first step he takes, with the assent of these oracular sages, is to propose for Theresa, in a long letter. But while waiting for her answer, he is sent by Lothario to visit his sister, to whose care, it appears, poor Mignon had been transferred by Theresa. This sister he takes, of course, for the Countess from whom he had parted so strangely in the castle, and is a little embarrassed at the thought of meeting her. But he discovers on the road that there is *another* sister; and that she is the very healing angel who had given him the great coat

when wounded in the forest, and had haunted his fancy ever since.

'He entered the house; he found himself in the most earnest, and, as he almost felt, the holiest place, which he had ever trod. A pendent dazzling lustre threw its light upon a broad and softly rising stair, which lay before him, and which parted into two divisions at a turn above. Marble statues and busts were standing upon pedestals, and arranged in niches; some of them seemed known to him. The impressions of our childhood abide with us, even in their minutest traces. He recognised a Muse, which had formerly belonged to his grandfather.'

He finds poor Mignon in a wretched state of health—and ascertains that it is a secret passion for him that is preying on her delicate form. In the mean time, and just as his romantic love for Natalia (his fair hostess) has resumed its full sway, she delivers him Theresa's letter of acceptance—very kind and confiding, but warning him not to lay out any of his money, till she can assist and direct him about the investment. This letter perplexes him a little, and he replies, with a bad grace, to the warm congratulations of Natalia—when, just at this moment, Lothario's friend steps in most opportunely to inform them, that Theresa had been discovered not to be the daughter of her reputed mother—and that the bar to her union with Lothario was therefore at an end. Wilhelm affects great magnanimity in resigning her to his prior claims—but is puzzled by the warmth of her late acceptance—and still more, when a still more ardent letter arrives, in which she sticks to her last choice, and assures him that 'her dream of living with Lothario has wandered far away 'from her soul;' and the matter seems finally settled, when she comes post-haste in her own person, flies into his arms, and exclaims, 'My friend—my love—my husband! Yes, for 'ever thine! amidst the warmest kisses'—and he responds, 'O my Theresa!'—and kisses in return. In spite of all this, however, Lothario and his friends come to urge his suit; and, with the true German taste for impossibilities and protracted agonies, the whole party is represented as living together quite quietly and harmoniously for several weeks—none of the parties pressing for a final determination, and all of them occupied, in the interval, with a variety of tasks, duties, and dissertations. At last the elective affinities prevail. Theresa begins to cool to her new love; and, on condition of Natalia undertaking to comfort Wilhelm, consents to go back to her engagements with Lothario—and the two couples, and some more, are happily united.

This is the ultimate catastrophe, though they who seek it in the book will not get at it quite so easily—there being an in-

finite variety of other events intermingled or premised. There is the death of poor Mignon—and her musical obsequies in the Hall of the Past—the arrival of an Italian Marchese, who turns out to be her uncle, and recognises his brother in an old crazy harper, of whom, though he has borne us company all along, we have not had time to take notice—the return of Philina along with a merry cadet of Lothario's house, as sprightly and indecorous as ever—the saving of Felix from poisoning, by his drinking out of the bottle instead of the glass—and the coming in of the Count, whom Wilhelm had driven into dotage and piety by wearing his clothes—and the fair Countess, who is now discovered to have suffered for years from her momentary lapse in the castle—the picture of her husband having, by a most apt retribution, been pressed so hard to her breast in that stolen embrace, as to give great pain at the time, and to afflict her with fears of cancer for very long after! Besides all this, there are the sayings of a very decided and infallible gentleman called Jarno—and his final and not very intelligible admission, that all which our hero had seen in the hall of the Castle was 'but the relics of a youthful undertaking, 'in which the greater part of the initiated were once in deep 'earnest, though all of them now viewed it with a smile.'

Many of the passages to which we have now alluded are executed with great talent; and we are very sensible are better worth extracting than most of those we have cited. But it is too late now to change our selections—and we can still less afford to add to them. On the whole, we close the book with some feelings of mollification towards its faults, and a disposition to abate, if possible, some part of the censure we were impelled to bestow on it at the beginning. It improves certainly as it advances—and though nowhere probable, or conversant indeed either with natural or conceivable characters, the inventive powers of the author seem to strengthen by exercise, and come gradually to be less frequently employed on childish or revolting subjects. While we hold out the work therefore as a curious and striking instance of that diversity of national tastes, which makes a writer idolized in one place who could not be tolerated in another, we would be understood as holding it out as an object rather of wonder than of contempt; and though the greater part certainly could not be endured, and indeed could not have been written in England, there are many passages of which any country might reasonably be proud, and which demonstrate, that if Taste be local and variable, Genius is permanent and universal.

ART. VIII. *Thoughts and Recollections by one of the last Century.* 8vo. pp. 237. London, Murray, 1825.

THE book with this odd title proves to be a sort of emptying of the commonplace-book of an observing and well-informed, though not a very profound, a very learned, or a very modest man. His liberality is somewhat below the standard of his other accomplishments; and though he says that 'these thoughts, 'if hastily thrown together, have not been hastily adopted; 'but that the grain has been frequently winnowed and examin'ed,' yet we can discover little indication either of patient thinking or careful revision; but, on the contrary, much of a somewhat flippant spirit, and a mind under the influence of prejudices that do not give its natural force fair play. The review of so desultory and miscellaneous a work, cannot have much systematick arrangement: and we shall therefore be contented with giving a few specimens, and offering a few remarks upon some of the author's topics, and some of his errors.

Among his prejudices, we certainly cannot reckon any very strict ones upon the subject of religion. He seems extremely liberal on all questions connected with it; and his work opens with three articles, '*Catholicism*,' '*The Catholick Priesthood*,' '*Our Own Clergy*,' in which he strives to remove some prevailing errors, fondly cherished by alarmed Protestants, and perfidiously inculcated by those who know better, but would turn those honest alarms to a good account.

'There is no subject on which even the more instructed cast of English is more miserably misinformed than on the tenets of Catholicism. Almost every one, for instance, from the Poet Laureate down to the parish clerk, believes in the grant of *prospective* indulgences. Yet not only is the thing untrue, but it is contrary to the fundamental principles of the Roman Catholic religion; for when absolution is retrospectively given upon confession, it is always on the understanding of full repentance and *future abstinence from sin*. Indeed the form in which our priests give their general absolution is taken from the practice of the Roman church.

'This principle was not only recognised (though it may have been departed from in darker ages) by Dante in the fourteenth century, and founded upon canons, but is the opinion, assurance *and practice* of all well informed Catholics in the present times; and I recollect well a conversation upon this subject with a lady of singular frankness in Italy. Having observed that she was a very exact performer of religious duties, I, indiscreetly enough, expressed some surprise at hearing her state that she never confessed herself. Her answer was, that, as she had not the resolution to change her mode of life,

(what this was may be inferred), she did not choose to add the sin of sacrilege to the catalogue of her other transgressions.

'This I boldly maintain to be the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church, and of all its well-informed followers. That a different notion may prevail among the ignorant, and that the uninformed may believe confession and absolution to be a complete and not a conditional quittance of scores, as far as penance is concerned, I imagine may be equally true. This false opinion may also, and I dare say does, make these sacraments sometimes practically mischievous; yet they are not so to the extent which we believe; for we seem to attach an odd idea to the effect of absolution. We conceive it to be an absolution from the torments of hell, thus freeing men from the fear of future punishment; whereas it only respects those of purgatory: so that an absolved Catholic is in no better plight than an absolved Protestant. Whereas an absolved Protestant (who is absolved out and out, even from hell itself) is in a much better condition than an absolved Catholic. I say this on the supposition, that the avowed doctrines of the English and Roman churches are held as true by their respective professors.' pp. 7–9.

He adds some just observations upon the great evils of auricular confession; and tells two droll stories, the one of some young ladies who cast lots which of them should confess to *fornication*, in order to learn the meaning of the word,—and the other, of a young lady who *bought* a printed catalogue of crimes, and confessed so many as made her ghostly counsellor's hair stand on end, till she relieved him by adding *simony* to the list of her transgressions. He chides with becoming severity the thoughtless bigotry of those who have always in their mouths the persecutions by which Cranmer fell, and forget the deaths which he had previously ordained,—reprobating the sectaries who attacked Laud, and passing over the cruelties of that accomplished High Priest. We need hardly add, how much the author differs from the ridiculous and ignorant doctrine (if it be nothing worse) of such men as Laud's successor, happily without his power, Bishop Blomfield, who holds the Catholick faith, and discipline, and practice, to be altogether unchangeable in different ages and countries. He shows, too, by convincing examples, the folly of those bigots, who ascribe all the vices of Catholick countries to the influence of the Romish religion; utterly denying the fact that they are more immoral than ourselves, and asking what differences you can discover, in this respect, between the Swiss of the Protestant and Catholick cantons, or between Protestant Berlin and Catholick Vienna?

Thus far our journey with the author has been smooth enough, and quite amicable. A page or two in favour of tythes, and the Church of England (for happily we cannot join in the title of

'*Our Own Clergy*') first raises some rather uneasy sensations; and in the next stage of the journey we are reluctantly forced to quit company altogether. For '*Education*' is now the subject; and while we always go to the sign of the '*Printing Press*,' he, we perceive, puts up at the '*Friars*.'

He begins by a hardy assertion, that the experiment of General Education has been tried, and 'is confessed not only not 'to have verified the sanguine expectations which were formed 'of it, but to have been productive of mischief.'

Even if there were a tincture of truth in this most confident and erroneous assertion, we should say, without hesitation, that it afforded no ground whatever for questioning the great benefit which Education has conferred on the community, and on all the individuals who compose it. The extended capacities it has bestowed, both for enjoyment and for utility, cannot, at all events, be questioned; and these are obviously of such magnitude, that, even if in some few instances, they had been perverted from their natural destination to purposes of mischief, it would be impossible to deny that a little more temptation to crime was amply atoned for by so vast an increase of serviceable talent, and of the means of innocent and intellectual enjoyment. It would be just as reasonable, in short, to grudge the poor the comforts of light and heat in their dwellings, because the chances of conflagration might consequently be somewhat increased, as to object to their receiving the benefits of education, because here and there, incorrigible vice might be rendered more bold or more expert in its transgressions. Crime, we fear, must increase numerically in every nation, with the increase of population and wealth: But it is a great mistake to suppose that they increase more than acts of virtue and beneficence, and a still greater to suppose, that any part of the former increase is owing to the diffusion of knowledge. This on the contrary is, beyond all doubt, a great counteracting cause. All vice, it is now generally agreed, proceeds from ignorance—and the only sure way to reclaim or to secure men from its temptations, is to instruct them as to the consequences of their yielding. The great causes of crime are, the want of means to prosecute lawful industry with success—the want of habits of reflection and self-command to point out the consequences of misconduct and to insure effect to the conviction—and the want of innocent and interesting occupations to dispel the ennui of idleness and insignificance. Now, education strikes directly at the root of *all* these causes of evil: And to say that a man who has been qualified by instruction for almost every species of honest industry—whose faculties and powers of reflection have

been cultivated by study—and to whom boundless sources of interesting speculation, and honourable ambition, have thus been laid open, is, in consequence of these very things, more likely to commit crimes, than one in opposite circumstances, is obviously to maintain, not an erroneous, but an *absurd* proposition, and in fact tobe guilty of a plain contradiction in terms.

It is very true that education will not absolutely eradicate our evil propensities—and that to those depraved individuals, whom it has not been able to correct, it may occasionally afford the means of more deliberate and more effective guilt. It is quite true, for example, that a man who has been taught to *write*, is better qualified to commit *forgery* than one who has not. But it is equally true, that a man who can *speak* is better fitted to commit *perjury* than one who is dumb—and that one who has been cured of palsy is more likely to engage in assaults, than one who is still disabled by such a malady: But it is no more the natural or common use of the power of writing to facilitate forgery, than it is of speech or manual vigour to forward deceit or violence;—and the reasoning is not less absurd which would on such grounds arraign the expediency of teaching all men to write, than that by which it should be concluded, that the world would be much happier and better, if the bulk of mankind were mute and incapable of motion!

It is really too great a condescension, however, to reason against such radical follies. The material point is, that the *assertion*, to which the author before us prudently limits hisdoctrine, is certainly and entirely erroneous. Where he found the *admission* to which he has referred, he has not been pleased to inform us—and we know that no such admission could be made with truth. The enemies of the Bell and Lancaster system have been long challenged to produce a single instance of a boy educated in these systems having ever been arraigned for a crime, and we have not heard that they have yet answered the defiance. This is conclusive as to the point immediately at issue. But the general fact required no such special confirmation. To what but to the better education of our people—their greater industry, and greater fitness for industry, can it be ascribed, that, with all our increase in wealth and population, there are now actually fewer crimes in Great Britain, than there were two hundred years ago? On what other principle can it be explained, that of the crimes committed in *educated* America, nearly a half are committed by an insignificant handful of *uneducated* Irish? To what else shall we refer the singular contrast in this respect between the Scotch and Irish population? The instance of the Scotch indeed, the author thinks it necessary to dispose of, because the phrase has

happily got abroad that they are an educated, and therefore a moral people; and that is effected by our 'Thinker and Recollector,' who thinks better than he remembers, and fancies more than he thinks. 'It was forgot, it seems, that the Scotch did not 'start suddenly into an enlightened people; that they were e'ducated under their own priesthood; and *that* a priesthood 'especially fitted for the instruction and guidance of the poor, 'who, in teaching them to read, taught them as well *what* they '*ought* to read.' Indeed! The priests, if by these he means the Catholic priests, were driven out of Scotland a century before the first step was made towards the system—the blessed system of parish schools; and the Presbyterian religion was established before the Act passed for putting that system in activity. Nor do the Presbyterian clergy interfere, except most remotely, with the schools even now. As for the Scotch becoming moral by the slow operation of clerical instruction, unconnected with their schools, we know that no people ever were in a more deplorable state than they were when the clerical influence was the greatest—when Fletcher of Salton drew his celebrated picture of his countrymen, and that their improvement was rapid from the establishment of the parochial schools.

So much for our author's facts; as a sample of his reasoning powers, take the next sentence. 'The English did not take these 'points, or indeed any thing else, into consideration, but the 'cheapness and facility of the means of teaching children to 'read and write; as if mental were not more important than 'intellectual education; as if intellectual education (if only 'considered) was not to be considered as a mean as well as an 'end—as a mode of strengthening, if I may so express myself, 'the intellectual muscle—and as if it did not lose half its value 'if it did not open the road to further progress in that great 'road to knowledge, to which it should serve as a gate.' Now, the meaning of this is truly oracular; and the distinction taken, or rather the contrast stated between *mental* and *intellectual*, is most accurately metaphysical, no doubt. But we wish to know, if the acquisition of reading and writing, supposing it were made by a miracle, in a minute, would not be a very valuable one, though the process of making it could not, on that supposition, possibly strengthen the intellectual powers. Our author means to speak of education as an exercise; and so no doubt it generally proves to be: But this is its indirect and incidental value; its primary use is, that it puts us in possession of some faculty which before we had not; and he who undervalues the learning itself, or the great instruments of attaining it, because it is easily and mechanically gained, would of course, and in consistency, refuse

the bequest of a hundred thousand pounds,—because the earning it would more certainly display, and exercise his faculties! Perhaps a reasoner like this has little right to assert, 'that no nation ever went so suddenly and universally *mad* as 'the English did on the subject of education.'

On the subject of *Bible Societies*, our author is quite as accurate as on the kindred one of schools. He reckons these two as indicating 'a species of mania,' (p. 42); and represents the advocates as 'forcing *Roman Catholics* to read the Bible without a comment.' He then inveighs very freely against the morality of the Old Testament, as extremely dangerous if unaccompanied with explanations; and remarks how prone the illiterate are to prefer it to the more pure system built upon it, in the New. Surely of all ridiculous perversions of fact, this is the most inexcusable. The Bible Societies distribute the Bible, not denying by any means the expediency of comment and explanation; but, perceiving that different sects are not agreed upon the comment and explanation fit to be given, and therefore cannot join in distributing any thing but the text, which all sects alike receive. They give the Bible, therefore, and leave each sect to supply the commentary to its own members. He who would deny the propriety of this, must be the advocate of tests, exclusions, and every species of intolerance. He must join the silly creatures who are raising a cry of irreligion against the New London University, because it does not teach Theology,—as if Letters and Philosophy could not be taught, on which all sects are agreed, without teaching Divinity, on which no two sects think alike, and none can, if they think sincerely, suspend their mutual hostility for a day. We marvel the more at such sentiments in the volume before us, because they are at direct variance with the whole of the author's liberal opinions upon religious matters.

One of the longest and least satisfactory articles in this little volume is upon '*Languages.*' It is also far from being correct. Thus, he says, 'that the Italian and Englishman think 'they read Virgil as Virgil should be read, when they say, '*ărmă virŭmque căno*; yet, the pronunciation of the first syllable 'of the third word is as monstrous a violation of quantity as 'could be made by a Scotchman educated at Edinburgh or 'Glasgow.' (p. 112.) Now we deny that any Italian or Englishman ever prided himself on his reading Virgil according to the quantity, (which, we presume, is what the author means by reading him as he ought to be read), unless he accented *cănō*, by putting the stress on the second syllable. When he reads otherwise, he abandons all idea of expressing quantity by ac-

cent. But why this fling at Edinburgh and Glasgow, as if their *alumni* were quite proverbial for false quantities? It is singular enough that the only two blunders in quantity on record in Parliament, were made by an Irishman and an Englishman—Mr Burke's *vectīgal*, and Sir R. Walpole's wager with Mr Pulteney. But our author should be sparing of his sneers on this point; for we suppose a blunder in grammar is somewhat worse than one in quantity, and indicates a more ignorant scholar. What will be said, then, of this author's proficiency in Latin, when, in the very same article, and only a few pages before his triumphant sarcasm at us poor Scotch, he speaks of Italy 'from the country of the *Allobrogi* up to that of the Veneti?' (p. 103.) Now every boy knows that the word is *Allobroges*, if he *has* read either Cæsar or Sallust; and we venture to doubt if any ordinary youth, educated either at Edinburgh or Glasgow, could be found capable of committing such a blunder. Nay, from such a slip as this, (and one or two other passages), we greatly suspect that our author, were he to read any given page of Latin or Greek prose, would quite equal the average blunders in quantity, likely to be made by a Scotch youth, whether from Edinburgh or from Glasgow. But, after all, if Scotticisms be so very grating to this writer, why does he himself talk of '*vocables?*'—a word not to be found, we will venture to say, in Dr Johnson; and, though possibly in some bad and old writers, only there to be found in the company of other admitted Scotticisms. In classical matters, too, he is, generally speaking, not over nice. Thus, he gives us a long *excursus* on what he calls the active use of a neuter verb, viz. *hope*; which he finds in Dryden and in Pope borrowing from him; as, '*he hopes the hunted bear*,' and '*he hopes the scaly breed.*' All this, our author will have it, arises from a slip in Dryden's translation of the verse, 'Optat aprum aut fulvum descendere 'monte leonem,' 'He hopes the boar,' &c. Now, can any thing possibly be less correct? There is no 'transformation of 'a verb neuter into a verb active' at all, in any of these passages. To choose or wish (*opto*) is active, and so is to hope; and it is as accurate English to 'hope the bear,' as to 'hope 'the bear may come'—'to wish a thing,' as to 'wish that 'thing may come.' Clarendon speaks of 'Danby wishing 'Antrim's assistance;' and Johnson gives this as an example of the active use of the verb. The Apostle speaks of charity, 'hoping all things; believing all things.'

Such are a few of this smart writer's faults and errors; but it would be unfair to dismiss them without some notice of his merits. He is, generally speaking, a very pleasing companion,

and writes in a lively and taking style, never wearying us by prolixity; seldom, if ever, offending by bad taste. He is, too, rather an acute observer of smaller matters; and occasionally indicates some originality of views, setting ordinary things in new lights, and marking what others pass by unnoticed. The following observations on the habits of animals are excellent in their kind.

'Every one, conversant with beasts, knows that not only their natural but that many of their acquired qualities are transmitted by the parents to their offspring. Perhaps the most curious example of the latter fact may be found in the Pointer.

'This animal is endowed with the natural instinct of winding game, and stealing upon his prey, which he surprises, having first made a short pause, in order to launch himself upon it with more security of success. This sort of *semicolon* in his proceedings man converts into a *full stop*, and teaches him to be as much pleased at seeing the bird or beast drop by the shooter's gun, as at taking it himself. The staunchest dog of this kind, and the original pointer, is of Spanish origin, and our own is derived from this race, crossed with that of the fox-hound or other breed of dog, for the sake of improving his speed. This mixed and factitious race of course naturally partakes less of the true pointer character; that is to say, is less disposed to stop, or at least, he makes a shorter stop at game. The factitious pointer is, however disciplined, in this country, into staunchness; and, what is most singular, this quality is, in a great degree, inherited by his puppy, who may be seen earnestly standing at swallows or pigeons in a farm-yard. For intuition, though it leads the offspring to exercise his parent's faculties, does not instruct him how to direct them. The preference of his master afterwards guides him in his selection, and teaches him what game is better worth pursuit. On the other hand, the pointer of pure Spanish race, unless he happens to be well broke himself, which in the south of Europe seldom happens, produces a race which are all but unteachable, according to our notions of a pointer's business. They will make a stop at their game, as natural instinct prompts them, but seem incapable of being drilled into the habits of the animal which education has formed in this country, and has rendered, as I have said, in some degree, capable of transmitting his acquirements to his descendants.

'Acquired habits are hereditary in other animals besides dogs. English sheep, probably from the greater richness of our pastures, feed very much together; while Scotch sheep are obliged to extend and scatter themselves over their hills for the better discovery of food. Yet the English sheep, on being transferred to Scotland, keep their old habit of feeding in a mass, though so little adapted to their new country: so do their descendants: and the English sheep is not thoroughly naturalized into the necessities of his place till the third generation. They same thing may be observed as to the nature of

his food, that is observed in his mode of seeking it. When turnips were introduced from England into Scotland, it was only the third generation, which heartily adopted this diet, the first having been starved into an acquiescence in it. In the same manner it required some years to establish the English practice of bringing up calves by hand in Scotland; the first who were so fed, being cheated into swallowing milk, as the English calves at first are, by dipping the finger in the bowl and giving it the animal to suck. Nor was this mode of administering nourishment (slowly and reluctantly admitted by Lowland calves) ever, I believe, cordially adopted by their mountain kindred. The Highland beast has shown himself the worthy imitator of the Highlandman, and is as obstinate in his opposition to this, as his Celtic master is to any other Saxon improvement which can be offered to him.

The observations on national politeness are also excellent, though inferior to those in the preceding extract.

'While, however, we have seen the Frenchman's passions, although unaltered, taking new channels during the Revolution, we have seen all his characteristic qualities survive a shock by which one should have naturally supposed they would have been annihilated. The most striking of these, and which was most likely to have suffered a change, is that

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which above all things distinguishes the people. This has again emerged from the thunder-cloud which obscured it for a moment; and after all the drunken excesses of Jacobinism, it is impossible to find oneself in Paris (as a friend once observed to me) without being conscious that one is in the capital of the most polished nation in Europe. No license, unless on some political occasion, is ever taken by the mob; no injury is ever done to public monuments, nor even any innocent extravagance indulged in. All is order, all is decency, all is tranquillity. Go to the lowest *restaurateur's* saloon, frequented by hackney coachmen and corporals, and you will find napkins and four-pronged forks; and there is not a mountain cabaret where such are not to be seen, be they of diaper or dowlass, silver or pewter; while, at all decent inns and hotels, they are of damask and silver. Go to a *guingette*, and, in a promiscuous assemblage of both sexes of the lower orders, you will see every thing conducted with decorum. The spectator will find the same appearances of modesty and discretion which distinguish the assemblies of the drawing-room; nor will he ever hear a word, or witness an action, which militates against propriety. This diffusion of politeness through all ranks, and almost as remarkable among the lowest as among the highest, excluding always mere conventional points of refinement, is the more remarkable, because it does not exist in other European nations. Yet a greater internal commerce in some (as in England) would render such a diffusion of civilization more explicable.

'This confinement of certain delicacies of life to a certain cast is

therefore unintelligible to Frenchmen not minutely acquainted with our customs, and often leads them into extravagant conclusions. Thus I was once well acquainted with a French gentleman, (I mean a gentleman in the French acceptation of the word), a prisoner on his parole, whom I used to meet at the table of the governor of a foreign settlement, who asked me to visit him in his *chateau*, if I should ever find myself in its neighbourhood. I profited by this invitation on the ratification of the second peace, and found him, with his family and parish priest, just returned from England, whither he had emigrated during the fury of the Revolution. Addressing himself to this person, my host observed, "You see these messieurs (meaning me and another Englishman) do not eat with their knives."—"All Englishmen that I ever saw, do," replied the priest; and I was appealed to in order to settle the question, which had apparently been agitated between the two, each reasoning from their respective experiences. I began by asking the priest where he had lived in London; and being informed that he had boarded with a family in St. Martin's Lane, told the *Seigneur*, that I had no doubt the *Curé* was correct in his report, as far as regarded his personal observation. His astonishment was extreme.

'I have said that the same general diffusion of refinement is not to be found in the other nations of Europe; but it may certainly be found in some of their provinces; and I know no better instances in support of my opinion respecting national character being hereditary, (and this more especially exemplified in the quality I have been last discussing), than in the Florentine and Vicentine provinces of Italy; both pre-eminent for their docility, industry, and refinement. Nothing indeed can be more striking to a stranger than the existence of a national character in these provinces, entirely distinct from that of the other tribes by which they are bounded, and differing most from those with which they are in most immediate contact. We see something like this at home in the distinction which is discernible in the Scotch and English, where only separated by an imaginary line. Here, however, a diversity in religion and civil government may explain the thing; but in one of the two instances which I have adduced, to wit, that of the Vicentine province, no moral causes offer a solution of the difficulty. The Vicentine district *is*, as every one knows, and *has been* for ages, an integral part of the Venetian dominions, professing the same religion and governed by the same laws as the other continental provinces of Venice. Yet the English character is not more different from the French, than that of the Vicentine from the Paduan; while the contrast between the Vicentine and his other neighbour, the Veronese, is hardly less remarkable. The Tuscan is as distinguishable, in his docility, industry, and politeness, from his two opposite neighbours, the Roman and the Bolognese, both of whom are conspicuously rude, idle, and turbulent. How the Vicentine and Tuscan characters were formed, it is difficult to conjecture; but it is clear that they have, under very singular circumstances, preserved their natural elements, however acquired.' pp. 198-206.

Art. IX. *Geschichte des Preussischen Staats, vom Frieden Zu Hubertsburg, bis Zur Zweiten Pariser Abkunft.* Drei Baende. Frankfurt am Main, 1820.

It reflects no little honour on the enlightened class of *our* politicians, that they seem every day more and more inclined to adopt the lofty faith of the ancients (a faith for which thousands among them sacrificed invaluable lives),—that the security and welfare, as well as the honour and glory, of a nation, depends mainly on its form of Government; and that all questions of national happiness, morality, and progressive improvement are *settled* at once by the endurance of an Absolute Monarchy. It is, indeed, a proof of extreme narrowness of mind, to attach any value to the casual and momentary felicity which some nations have enjoyed under that form of government; or even to form a conclusion from thence as to the capacity which such governments possess of amelioration. What, on the whole, does the experience of the last thousand years establish so clearly, as the wretched and distracted condition of the nations which have depended for their happiness on the life or death of a minister or king?—which have undergone, every twenty or thirty years, the agitations of a true revolution, according as mere accident endowed their masters with spirit, benevolence, and energy, or cursed them with stupidity, ferocity, and weakness? Even in this lottery, too, how few have been the prizes! how perishable the prosperity they seemed to bring! With the exception of our own England, whose fortunes and honour depend not on the life of individuals, how few have obtained any security against the utmost excesses of misgovernment? We need but open our eyes indeed, to see these evils, inherent in absolute monarchies, exemplified in the present situation of most of the Continental nations. The favourable auspices which, only ten years ago, cheered the people of these great countries have already vanished; and the present times are by no means calculated to diffuse among impartial observers *cheerful* anticipations of their future condition.

The author of the work before us has brought down the history of Prussia from the peace of Hubertsburg to his own days, with as much impartiality as was possible in the times in which he wrote. Though he avows a particular admiration for the ancient historians, and especially for Tacitus, and consequently affects the style of that renowned hater of despotism,—a style, indeed, admirably suited to the subject; it is obvious, that the influence of the present times has pressed so heavily on him while describing recent events, that it would have been better

if he had withheld this part at least of his work till a future period. Such, at least, we think, would have been the determination of Tacitus. Of the reign of Frederick II. he gives a more favourable, and, we think, a juster account than was common among a party of Prussian writers, among whom Mr Arndt took the lead:—And he doubtless, in his dreary confinement at Bonn, may now frequently reflect on the liberality with which Frederick acknowledged the rights of opinion.

Frederick II., it is true, did not alter the system of absolute monarchy, to the administration of which he succeeded. In all essential points, the military department, the interior administration, and the legislative power, were concentrated in his hands; nor did he abolish those relics of the middle ages,—the prerogatives of one class of society over the other: But he made the most of this despotic system, by the astonishing powers of his mind; not only mitigating its ferocity, but working all the good that could be achieved by it in the life of one man. His great and redeeming qualities were, a steady love of *Justice*, by which he prevented the nobles from indulging their innate inclination to extend still farther privileges already too repugnant to reason and to right; *secondly*, his unexampled *Activity* in preventing abuses of delegated power,—abuses from which nothing but such activity could redeem such a system, and which are so apt to obstruct the designs of the best king when governed by his ministers; *thirdly*, the direction of that activity to the substantial welfare of his subjects, by the promotion of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; *fourthly*, the laudable *Parsimony* which constantly insured to him the means of attaining his important ends; and, *lastly*, his fondness for *Literature*, his respect for its cultivators, and the unbounded and wholly unprecedented liberality with which he acknowledged the rights of *Opinion* and of the *Press*. This was, beyond all doubt, the most genuine indication of his truly great mind,—that, confident in the truth and justice of his proceedings, he felt that he would degrade himself by restraining the freedom of opinion. Patronizing, both by his writings and his actions, the rights of the human mind, he did more to promote the spirit of philosophical research, to encourage scientific and even political improvement, and to extinguish superstition and prejudice, than had been effected for centuries before his time. Some writers have reproached him with partiality for French, and aversion to German literature; but great living names in German literature have vindicated him from that reproach. * In those days,

* See Schloffer; Geschichte de 18ten Jahrh. 1 Theil.

the German works of taste were framed on the model of *Gottsched*; and it would be hard to insist that a genius like that of Frederick II. should be pleased with such productions. Others have upbraided him with the little regard he bestowed on the clergy. In this he may, perhaps, have gone too far; but many great men have been of opinion, that too great deference to that order must ever be pernicious. The most unreasonable reproach of all, was that which was clamorously urged against his system, after the battle of Jena, by those factious and servile writers, who, unwilling to trace the evil to its true source, found it easier to calumniate the memory of the great King, than to denounce the vices of their own party: They said that *the spirit* of his government was vicious; that when the extraordinary energy and skill which had given life and unnatural power to that system, had ceased to enlighten the cabinet of his successors, its vicious spirit survived, its clinging vices spread alike over the civil and military departments of the administration, and speedily wrought their effects in the temporary ruin of the monarchy. These vague and unintelligible calumnies, however, continued but for a short time. They were silenced by more enlightened and impartial spirits, and are only now and then revived in some remote aristocratical papers.

It is worthy of remark, that of all the absolute monarchs on the Continent, excepting Henry the Fourth of France, none ever acquired the love of his people to so great a degree as Frederick; and he gained it, not by the gift of a constitution, (for there was none), but by his personal merits; thus exposing himself to the same charge brought against the hero of France,—that he neglected to secure the happiness of his people against the vices or incapacity of his successors.

The effects of this accordingly were but too soon apparent. After the death of Frederick the Second, his system of rule was reversed. A policy, vacillating, and without principle in its foreign relations, and in its internal concerns obeying the mere impulse of private passions, very soon threw the kingdom into the most horrible confusion. It was not by the vices of Frederick's system,—it was by the absence of all the virtues by which that monarch rendered harmless the evils of despotism, and gave scope to enterprise and industry,—it was by vices, which, supplanting these virtues, carried to their utmost extent the inherent propensities of despotism to produce national calamity, that the decay of his kingdom was occasioned. The government of Frederick William the Second, exhibits indeed a signal instance of the sudden transitions incident to absolute monarchies, from great prosperity and splendour, to disgrace and misery. This monarch, addicted to despotism and debauchery,

soon became wholly unacquainted with the government: profligate mistresses governing the King; worthless ministers, caballing and intriguing against each other; crowds of dependants on mistresses and ministers holding the public offices to sale!—These were the rulers of the state!—The public treasury, which had been replenished by the sedulous economy of Frederick, was plundered in a few years; the spirit of selfishness and corruption pervaded all departments; the aspiring churchman again raised his head, and, to indemnify himself for the subordination in which he had been kept by the former King, dared to impose an intolerable oppression of conscience. At length visionaries, exorcists, conjurers of spirits, found a place at the court, and entitled it to the description applied, if we rightly remember, by Cardinal de Retz, to that of a French king,—'At this court reigned all vices by which monarchies are ruined, dissipation, voluptuousness, gaming, and magical divination.'

After the death of Frederick William II., the more obvious scandals were indeed removed. The Countess of Lichtenau was sent away, and part of the creatures of the system discharged; but the fundamental disorders, which had thriven like weeds in the absence of a constitution, and of all pretensions to public virtue, still flourished as before. The corruption of the aristocracy, in particular, hastened to its crisis; and when the declining monarchy ventured to grapple with the gigantic power of Napoleon, in the field of Jena, it was found even more impotent than that of Austria in the battles of Ulm and Austerlitz. The measureless infamy of the Prussian generals in that war, is now well known; but the profligacy of the aristocracy also, in every other department, was exposed in a multitude of publications, which, though deemed unpatriotic by more recent writers, have nevertheless been very serviceable, not only to history and to posterity, but also to contemporary minds, as they have cooperated in fully demonstrating the utter rottenness of the pillars of the state.*

Prussia was now placed in a situation doubtless the most desperate to which a state can be reduced. To dependence and oppression from without, were superadded internal infirmities, which seemed incurable, and the vigilance of a suspicious enemy, armed with overwhelming power.

In this situation of affairs, the minister Von Stein seized the helm of the state. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest mi-

* The most remarkable in this respect were the writings of Kölln, called Feuerbrände.

nisters of modern times, and the immortal merit of his services to Prussia, will, though perhaps not now, because his system has already vanished, but certainly in future times, be fully appreciated. Disdaining the aristocracy which had ruined the state, he applied to *the nation* for its relief. The two grand and intimately connected objects of his administration, were to deliver his country from foreign oppression, and to create a liberal constitution. He formed a plan for rousing it to a sense of its dignity, by freeing it from the degrading domination of the aristocracy,—for inspiring it with national feelings and patriotism, by admitting it to a share in the public councils, leaving to each community the management of its own concerns; and for creating, by these means, a mental power in the whole body of the people, which, on a proper occasion, whenever fate should afford it, might be able to break her fetters and vanquish the oppressor. How far, and how long the King concurred in a system tending thus to regenerate the nation, and to create a free constitution, we refrain from defining, because the times that ensued have decided the question. We shall confine ourselves to a general survey of the most important effects of this system, introduced either by Stein himself, or by the ministry which he formed, and which acted on his principles for some time after his removal.

One of his first efforts was directed to the emancipation of a considerable part of the nation from villenage. During the period from 1807 to 1811, various decrees were passed for fixing the duties and rights of the new freeholders, and for indemnifying their former masters. *

In the year 1807, a law was passed which abolished an absurd and pernicious distinction between the estates of nobles, and those of peasants. Formerly, the farms of a nobleman could not be purchased by a commoner; those of a commoner might, in most cases, be transferred to a noble. This law abrogated the distinction, and removed the impediments to a free disposition of property.

The property of the nobles was exempt from the land-tax; the abolition of this exemption was gradually prepared and executed, in spite of opposition from the nobility, in the year 1810.

One of the most important decrees related to the municipal institution; it was framed on the model of the English municipal

* Villenage, that cruel outrage on the primary rights of man, still subsists over a great part of Russia; and the Autocrat of those serfs now gives laws to the Continent.

law; and was introduced at once throughout the whole kingdom. Von Stein rightly regarded this institution as tending to prepare the public spirit for the representative system. Connected with it was the abolition of guilds, and of all restraints and privileges by which trades and manufactures had been hitherto fettered.

The Prussian minister also directed his views to the military department. In 1808 and 1809, the humiliating exclusion of commoners from the rank of officer was removed, and every soldier was enabled to attain any rank in the army. At the same time, the barbarous punishment of military flogging was abolished. As this law was designed to excite the sentiment of military honour in the commoners, so the great establishments in this department were calculated to create a national military. The plan was excellent. To avoid exciting the suspicions of a watchful enemy, or violating a hard condition of the peace, which allowed only a small force to be kept on foot, Von Stein directed fresh masses of the national youth to be successively levied and trained to arms for several years, the former levies being dismissed to their homes. Care was taken to inspire every levy with proper feelings. Even the great measure of an universal national armament, executed at a later period and attended with such astonishing success, was then prepared by Von Stein, in conjunction with some military men, particularly *Scharnhorst.*

The system of Von Stein tended to develop the moral force of the nation, by the energy inherent in all liberal institutions. The execution of this plan, therefore, required everywhere men of talent and of elevated minds. Knowing that such men are not generally to be found in the common track of promotion, and under the cold formalities of administration, Stein himself took pains to seek them. Men of this character, who understood the tendency of his system, and cooperated with enthusiasm in his labours, were employed in the most important parts of every department, especially those of military affairs and of public instruction. Convinced of the powerful influence which mental culture must have on the promotion of such designs, he paid great attention to that object. By him, and by his party, the Universities of Berlin and Breslau, and, at a later period, that of Bonn, were established; the whole scheme of Education and of public instruction was directed to the development of national feelings; and men, distinguished not only by intellectual faculties and scientific attainments, but also by liberal and patriotic sentiments, took the lead in all literary institutions.

Meanwhile, Stein descried with alarm the germs of an internal opposition, and the rising suspicions of Napoleon. In

order, therefore, to settle his plan on a sure basis, independent of his own existence and ministry, he had recourse to one of those great measures, uncontrollable by ordinary considerations, and often the sole refuge of an oppressed nation. He founded the secret association, celebrated under the name of the *Tugendband*. It is not our present intention to describe that society; we would merely remark, that it was composed of the most eminent men of all classes; that its aim was to familiarize the nation with the idea of deliverance from her oppressors, and to awaken all her powers for that purpose; but, particularly to rouse the national Youth, and to infuse into them that lofty patriotism, and fixed contempt of death, on which was founded the freedom of the ancients. The activity of these men extended far and wide; some of them, such as Generals Scharnhorst and Grollmann, were intent on nationalizing the soldiery; others, like Fichte, Schleirmacher, &c. influenced the academic youth by their writings and animating lectures; others again, like Jahn, Arndt, &c., not only wrote, but travelled for the purpose of maintaining the association in different places. The former was especially engaged in conducting the warlike exercises of the youth.

By the combination of all these means, the kingdom was soon animated with a spirit unexampled perhaps in any modern community. Instead of a corrupt aristocracy, the nation itself rose up in the full energy of every faculty that can render the sense of oppression bitter, and the purpose of redress irresistible. Even in the war of Napoleon with Austria in 1809, the direction which the national spirit had received was clearly manifested, nor could it but with difficulty be restrained from breaking forth. The operations of Schill are well remembered.

At this time, Von Stein was no longer at his post; in 1808 he was persecuted and outlawed at the instance of Napoleon, and compelled to seek safety in flight. Before his departure, however, he addressed to all the high officers in the kingdom a circular letter, in which he developed the leading features of his system, as far as this was then possible or safe. That address incontestably shows that he aimed at a free political constitution, at the head of which a national representation should be entitled not only to be consulted, but to vote in all acts of legislation, and should be formed by the equal exercise of their political rights by all citizens, whether possessing one or one hundred acres of ground, whether engaged in trade, or in the cultivation of letters. Such are almost his own words; but this work he could not complete.

Though Von Stein was driven from his post, yet he had

given a degree of stability to his system by a ministry formed in his spirit. His successor also, the prime minister, Count and afterwards Prince Hardenberg, adhered to it for some time, but by no means with the energy and firmness of its author; and at last he renounced it entirely. Generally speaking, however, this system, of which the substance was deeply rooted in the nation, was maintained until 1815, and did not entirely disappear until 1818.

In the year 1813, the astonishing results prepared by the activity of Stein, announced a regenerated people. The vast scheme of universal armament (*landwehr*), formed by Scharnhorst, Arndt, and others, and rapidly executed by the whole nation; the spontaneous contributions supplied to the impoverished state by all classes; the enthusiasm with which every order and condition answered the call to arms; the unequalled courage of the soldiery in general, but especially of the regiments of the Landwehr, charging hostile batteries with the bayonet; the heroism of the volunteer corps, composed mostly of highly educated youths, who, like Spartans, regarded their country as everything, and danger and death as nothing, and whose exploits are immortalized among the Germans by the songs of *Theodor Körner:* these are phenomena almost unexampled in modern history. As the Allied armies advanced to victory, Von Stein was recalled to superintend the administration of the newly conquered countries. The re-appearance of this minister excited among the Prussians the universal hope of seeing him reinstated in his former place; but this hope was not to be realized.

Let us now cast a glance on Germany, properly so called. During the protectorate of Napoleon, a general opinion, long existing in its elements, had established itself, which may be consistently termed the *national opinion* of the Germans. It was the result, not only of recent events, but of the whole history of this people, clearly conceived by the enlightened classes, and deeply, though more vaguely, impressed on the feelings of the lower orders. The good effects of Napoleon's protectorate, particularly the abolition of the feudal oppressions, and the prerogatives and power of the clergy, were by no means undervalued; but in the concentration of all power in the persons of their respective princes, the people discerned the continued evils of a despotic government, rendered still more debasing by the dependence of those governments on a foreign conqueror. The body of the people, therefore, participated everywhere in the enthusiasm of the Prussians; and their princes, in many cases, gave way to the impulse. After they had shaken off the yoke,

the national opinion evinced itself in favour of a free constitution with equal clearness, unanimity, and force. We must be indulged in saying a word or two more on this subject, particularly as some English publications have given currency to very erroneous impressions with regard to it. In one popular work, for example, it has been stated that the Germans looked almost exclusively to the English *Parliament;* but that '*the trial by Jury* does not enjoy such great favour in the estimation of 'speculative men in Germany, as most English institutions do.' It is added, not less erroneously, that '*an unlicensed press* had 'not been deemed so necessary in Germany, on account of the 'extreme liberality with which the Censorship was administer-'ed; besides, a very large proportion of the literary men of 'Germany reside in, and are members of the Universities, 'whose privileges serve as a protection against any vexatious 'interference of the police.' What is the true condition of these privileges, and this liberality, we shall soon see; at present we shall only observe, that the Germans would have been the weakest of men, if they had really held the opinions here imputed to them. But the contrary is the fact. The national opinion on a free constitution, demanded *Representative assemblies*, invested with true legislative power, the judicial institution of *Jury-Trial*, independent of the government, and the freedom of *the Press*. Such was the importance attached to each of these demands, that it was generally deemed impossible to establish political liberty without the union of those three institutions. These sentiments were constantly and uniformly declared through all the organs of public opinion, in the learned discussions of national writers, in the numerous popular journals, and in the representative assemblies of the different states, as soon as they were introduced.* To these necessary bases of a free constitution, we may add two other objects, on which the general

* The most eminent jurists and philosophers of Germany, Thiebaut, Buckholz, Hazzi, *Zaccharicæ, Mittermaier, Graevell*, Welker, Rotteck, *Krug*, and many others, have distinctly developed these constitutional ideas. All enlightened statesmen coincided in the same sentiments, expressed with the full ardour of public interest, in numerous popular journals, as Nemesis, Der Patriot, des Oppositionsblatt, Der Rheinische, Mercur, Die Neckarzeitung, Der Reichsanzeiger, and in a multitude of pamphlets. Even in the latest times, the Chamber of Commons in Bavaria, made an attempt,—feeble and fruitless indeed, since the Austrian principles have prevailed, but clearly manifesting the national wishes, now unhappily suppressed,—for the introduction of Trial by Jury.

opinion was pronounced with almost equal unanimity,—one the establishment of complete freedom of Trade, and of liberty of internal commerce, unburthened with local tolls and taxations,—the other, a great central or federal Representation, uniting the different German communities into one vast political body, and thus securing the independence of the whole nation.

The Prussian government, still to some extent, in the hands of the liberal party, fully acquiesced in these demands. A Commission was appointed to make a Report on Jury-Trial; and this Report, printed at Berlin in 1818, demonstrates, by most solid and convincing arguments, the necessity for introducing this institution. The establishment of the Representative system, and of the liberty of the Press, was also promised; and meanwhile, the censorship was exercised with great liberality and forbearance. Prussia at that time enjoyed the unbounded confidence of all the different tribes composing the German nation. Not only her glorious exploits, but the character of her administration, the lustre of her recent literature, and the attention so nobly bestowed on public instruction, obtained full credit for the repeated declarations of her statesmen, that the political existence of this state was grounded in the strength of intellectual power, and of liberal ideas, and placed her, in the estimation of all Germany, foremost in the rank of those nations who had most deeply imbibed and most powerfully directed the spirit of the age.

Occupying this eminent station, Prussia appeared avowedly as the advocate of popular interests in the Congress of Vienna, as appears from the Reports of *Klüber*. That Congress united her still more closely to the majority of the German nation, because its result disappointed both her and the nation. Prussia obtained no satisfaction respecting her territorial demands; and the German people had to endure the frustration of their hopes for the formation of a central institution, which should unite the different states into one political body. The national party, therefore, (not the Princes) desired the protectorate of Prussia, at that time the champion of liberal ideas. And it is an undoubted fact, that on the strength of this popularity, and of the increasing dissensions in the Congress, she meditated at that time the establishment of a great national power in Germany, and might in all probability have succeeded in that bold design. But the reappearance of Napoleon suddenly changed the scene. The Congress of Vienna was dissolved;—that Congress, assembled at the most critical epoch in modern history, to satisfy the just demands of nations, separated, after having shamefully tampered with those just demands!

On the termination of the war, the Austrian Cabinet began clearly to develop its system of re-action. Indications of that system had already been disclosed in the base and unworthy treatment of the Tyrol, and of Lombardy, in the engagement extorted from the King of Naples, not to introduce a representative constitution into his states; and in the proposals made by the Austrian ministers in the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. The liberal party in Prussia now gradually lost its influence; the hopes which had been so long held out, of a representative assembly, and of the concomitant institutions, were not fulfilled. On the other hand, the opposition which the aristocracy had long ago formed against the principles of Von Stein daily gained ground, under the influence of Austria, and with the support of the barbarians, on the eastern frontier of Prussia. The most distinguished individual of the national party, who, with great military talents, united profound political views, and an astonishing energy of mind, General Scharnhorst, lay buried on the field of battle.

But the force of public opinion had not been ineffectual in Germany. In most of the states the Censorship had been actually abolished, and the unlicensed press introduced; legislative assemblies, much restricted indeed in their privileges, but not destitute of utility, had been established, and the national opinion, daily diffusing itself through a multitude of liberal journals, afforded just expectations of progressive improvement. In these circumstances, Austria, who had been associating herself with the Jesuits, the Turks, and the aristocracy of every kind, and had attached the Russian Court to her interests, deemed it seasonable to strike a decisive blow. On an occasion which in any other country would have merely given rise to a criminal process, she raised the cry of *revolution* in Germany. At this cry, all the aristocratical rubbish that had sunk into obscurity, and every modern fungus that had sprouted under the protectorship of Napoleon, collected around *Metternich* and *Gentz*. We have elsewhere exposed this dark scheme of Austria, and have shown, that the dearest interests of the German nation were attacked, or rather mortally wounded, by the decrees of Carlsbad in 1819, through which the liberty of the press was suspended, and liberal journals abolished; the privileges of the legislative chambers essentially diminished; the Universities subjected to the police, and a particular state-inquisition established at *Mentz*, to watch over the proceedings of the liberal party. To the honour of the German princes, it should be recorded, that the greater part of them consented to these decrees with great reluctance, overawed by the domineering influence of Metternich; and indeed some, as the kings

of Bavaria and Wirtemberg, ventured substantially to disregard them.

But what was the conduct of Prussia on occasion of this Austrian manifesto of despotism? It is plain, that Austria could never have carried her purposes into effect, if Prussia had acted on the principles of Stein, or even on those of the illustrious Frederick. The high duty of the Prussian Government, after the restoration of the State, demanded, in the opinion of the Prussian and German people, that she should, on the one hand, progressively develop the safe, tried, and liberal system of Stein in great national institutions; and on the other hand, should endeavour to improve the wretched military position to which she had been condemned by the Congress of Vienna. This second object could not be otherwise obtained than by keeping pace with the spirit of the age, and promoting the general interests of the German nations, who were now universally satisfied that their independence could only be secured, and the regeneration of their common country effected by a powerful and liberal protectorship, for which they were now willing to look in the intelligence and experience of Prussia. That State, however, *suddenly changed her policy*—shrunk back from the high vocation wherewith she had been called—and in a short time afforded another example of sudden transition from glory to shame,—a transition not less humiliating than that which ensued on the death of Frederick.

The liberal party was at last obliged to yield to the influence of Austria and Russia; and Prince Hardenberg abandoned himself as implicitly to the triumphant aristocratical party, as he had before appeared to do to the liberal party. The government of Prussia magnanimously foreswore that ancient jealousy of Austria, which Frederick the Second had proclaimed as the vital principle of the State, closed its eyes resolutely against all views of political improvement, and found, it would appear, a more suitable occupation in persecuting the assertors of liberal principles, in realizing the Austrian theory of *Obscuration*, and in serving the degrading office of whipper-in to the Holy Alliance, not only in its own states, but in all the other provinces of Germany. We will prove this immediately to be no exaggeration, by a slight view of the manner in which the decrees of Carlsbad were executed in Prussia. In the mean time, we cannot but stop to remark, that no one perhaps of the many disgusting scenes which abound in modern story, will so deeply affect the mind of the historian, as the intellectual degradation of this aspiring nation. No other of the states of the Continent has tarnished so fair a fame; has disappointed such lofty,

expectations, or sustained so vast a loss of credit and confidence, by yielding to the Austrian system.

The most distinguished men, who had acted on the principles of Von Stein, now lost either their offices or their influence. The most active, especially among the literati, were subjected to persecution on the pretext of *revolutionary opinions.* (The principles of these men were indeed revolutionary in the eyes of the aristocracy). The mode, the object, every thing in this inquistion is disgusting. The old tribunals were suspended, and special commissions appointed. These commissioners arrested their victims by surprise, and mostly in the night time; seized their papers, and placed their persons in close custody. In the new provinces an itinerant commission was instituted for this purpose, under one *Pape*, an obscure lawyer of Westphalia, selected for his jealous and venal disposition. In the provinces formerly belonging to France, the proceedings were at first conducted according to the existing laws; but when it was found that the prisoners would be acquitted by the juries, which still subsisted in those provinces, the institution itself was suspended by a Cabinet order, concerning these *demagogical* inquests, as they were called; upon which one of those victims, *Mühlenfels* of Cologne, a courageous and high-minded man, declared that thenceforward he should consider himself as arbitrarily outlawed, and that he would answer no more questions. After making this declaration, he was conducted to a dungeon at Berlin. Indeed these commissions placed every subject at the absolute disposal of the government; all protecting laws and forms were suspended; the accused, without any specific charge, were subjected to a secret examination, and exposed to every kind of mental torture, incident to that horrible mode of procedure. The objects of those examinations were principally mere *opinions;* and an arbitrary discretion of the most revolting nature was exercised in the interpretation of papers; in the perversion of sentiments into crimes; and if actions were the object, those actions had been provoked by the government itself in former times. Even the act of concurring in the formation and promotion of the *Tugendbund*, was not exempt from those examinations.

They were directed by the Supreme State Inquisition of Mentz; and by an expedient which, in this respect also, withdrew the accused from their competent judges, the Court of Breslau was authorized to pronounce the decision. The members of this Court had previously been changed, according to the views of the Government; and of course were always ready to find the

accused guilty. In most cases, however, no sentence whatever was pronounced; the accused remained under arrest; or, if set at liberty, he was dismissed from office, and exposed at every instant to new persecutions. Two of the most distinguished of these victims were the professors *Jahn* and *Arndt*. Both had devoted the vigour of their lives to the great object of the Prussian patriots, the deliverance of their country; Arndt, by his political connexions, his writings, and his projects, had acquired the confidence and friendship of Scharnhorst, and was highly esteemed by Von Stein. Jahn had served the good cause, by his astonishing activity in the formation of the *Tugendbund*. Endowed with transcendant personal qualities, he formed the main connecting link of that association. On the first dawn of good fortune, he marched into the field with a corps of youths whom he had formed by a peculiar system of gymnastic exercises. No man in Prussia had such a predominant influence over the national youth, or so great a share of popularity as Jahn. On the termination of the war, Arndt had been appointed to a Professorship at the University of Bonn, *as a reward (to use the words of Prince Hardenberg) for his actions and writings*. Jahn, about the same time, resumed his system of gymnastic exercises for youth. In the year 1819, both these men became the objects of a signal persecution. Those very writings and actions, which Prince Hardenberg had pronounced worthy of reward, were subjected to a severe inquisition, while this very Prince Hardenberg was still living, and directing the administration; and the Professor for several years endured the greatest of all tortures to a man of genius—the examination of an ignorant and brutal inquisitor, the abovementioned Pape. On him sentence was never pronounced. Jahn's cause was brought before the Court of Berlin, to save appearances, as he enjoyed the high respect of the nation. That Court acquitted him; but the acquittal only exasperated the ruling faction, and he was instantly imprisoned anew in the fortress of Colberg! A deep melancholy was the consequence of his separation from his wife and children; these died one by one, in sorrow and indigence. By a second sentence of a Court of Justice, he has lately been a second time acquitted. Unsatisfied by these monstrous inquisitions in the States of Prussia, in which the Government was at once accuser, judge, and witness, through the deposition of hired spies, the Aristocratic faction also successfully employed its influence to compel the liberal Duke of Weimar either to dismiss, or to sanction an inquisition against the celebrated professors, Fries, Ohen, Luden, and others.

This arbitrary conduct thenceforward characterized all the

measures of the government. The censorship was exercised with the utmost rigour; all books published in foreign countries, if not written conformably to the political creed of the prevailing faction, that is, according to the Austrian doctrine of blind obedience, were prohibited, as in Austria. Even in cases where the censorship had been less severe, authors were subsequently persecuted for their publications. The case of this kind, which caused the greatest sensation in Germany, was that of Professor Goerres in the year 1820. He demonstrated, in a political pamphlet, that the Government of Prussia had not fulfilled its promise of giving a constitution, and of making no alteration in the condition of the Rhenish provinces. For this assertion, he was ordered to be arrested; he escaped, however, and fled to France. From thence he transmitted an offer and request to be tried before competent judges, but this was flatly rejected.

The Universities were subjected to the inspection of Commissaries of the Police, and divested of most of their privileges. Thus, the scientific institutions of Prussia, which had constituted her greatest glory, were openly disgraced. Those commissaries, richly paid, hardened in ignorance, and impelled by the spirit of persecution which actuated their masters, scrutinized alike the lectures and the lives of the professors. Every deviation from the doctrine of absolute monarchy, every allusion to the disasters of the time, involved the penalty of immediate expulsion; a letter of Professor de Wette subjected him to that penalty. Private lists were kept, in which the political opinions of the professors at all the Universities and Gymnasia were entered. The method and the objects of instruction were alike regulated, on a particular political plan, conformably to the designs of the ruling faction. How utterly were the nurseries of science, and its cultivators, degraded from the eminent situation in which they had been placed by Frederick the Second, and by the ministry of Von Stein! Sunk from their natural elevation above the transient views of changeable politics, they were enthralled to the servile doctrines of absolute sovereignty, and exposed at every moment to the insults of the police. In this thraldom the torch of truth fell from the hands that held it, at the time when its light was most wanted; the spirit of inquiry was subdued, and venal flatterers alone wrote on the most sacred interests of society; while truth was reduced to the sad alternative of silence or martyrdom.

The external administration, also, which had been free and open under the ministry of Von Stein, now assumed that sinister character of mystery and distrust which always marks a

despotical government. An extensive secret police was organized; spies were hired by the month to communicate reports; the inviolability of the post-office was no longer respected; the local authorities were incessantly receiving secret orders and commissions; and the police,—in all times and places dangerously arranged in the states of the Continent,—now seemed, in Prussia, to have engrossed the whole administration and jurisdiction.

If it be asked, what truly useful measure for promoting internal prosperity has been effected during this period? we have scarcely any reply to make. A new liturgy, to be sure, has been introduced, which has occasioned interminable quarrels, and almost a schism, among the clerical orders; the form of administration has been modelled and re-modelled, to no beneficial purpose; a new system of taxation has been organized, which proves extremely burthensome, but which finds its excuse in the ruinous state of the finances. The line of custom-houses, however, which now surrounds the Prussian States has not even this apology—any more than the high tariff of duties, which almost totally excludes commerce of every kind with the other German States. Those States, always disposed to retaliate, and not averse to such a financial speculation, have successively imitated this exclusive system; and thus the great Germanic nation now exhibits to foreigners the ridiculous picture of a number of friendly states, each barricadoed like a fortress by its own government, though the productive classes in all of them cannot exist without a perfectly free, mutual intercourse. The inevitable consequences of this system have at last become abundantly manifest; trade has been reduced to the brink of ruin; corn has sunk to one-third of its former value; and landed property still lower. The agricultural classes, weighed down by taxes, are every where deeply depressed, in many places languishing in utter wretchedness; and the wish of emigrating to America has never been so general among them as at present. Most of the governments are aware, though too late, of the destructive effects of their system. After fruitless conferences on the subject at Darmstadt, which were frustrated by Austria, the governments of Nassau, Darmstadt, Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, are now again consulting at Stuttgard and Mentz, for the relief of agriculture and commerce. Prussia alone persists in this destructive system.

If it be asked, what has been done during this period for augmenting the external force of the nation in relation to other states, and for enhancing her influence in the political system? we must answer—Nothing. Drawn into the dark path of the Holy

Alliance, she has not even participated in the profit derived by Russia and Austria from that perfidious and tyrannical system. Russia has extended her influence on the Continent; Austria has subjected Italy and Germany to her sway; but Prussia, while outflanked by both those powers, has been contented with the disgusting office of taking the lead in the persecution of liberal ideas, in the oppression of science and literature, and in the execution of the despotic measures planned by her superiors. And what has she gained? Russia rules over hordes of barbarians; Austria over a mass of people studiously kept for centuries in a state of profound ignorance. Neither of those despotisms, therefore, inflicts any vital injury on itself by its despotic measures. But the political strength of Prussia necessarily rests on the affection and respect of an *enlightened* people; and of that support she has deprived herself. And yet, with an incredible infatuation, she continues to perform her degrading part. In the year 1823, new and aggravated inquisitions were organized. *Koepenick*, an old castle near Berlin, was transformed into a state-prison, to which numbers of persecuted persons were conducted from all parts of the empire. In the same spirit of subserviency she cheerfully acquiesced in the new proposals, or rather *orders*, issued by Austria in the Diet at Frankfort, on the 24th August 1824. The object of those proposals was the renewal and aggravation of the decrees of Carlsbad in 1819. The liberty of the press was now totally abolished; a censorship was regulated in all the States, and placed under the direct control of Austria; the universities were still farther degraded; the privileges of the representative assemblies abolished, and new inquisitions ordained. These, like the former measures of terror, were abhorred by the people, and generally by the Princes of Germany; but those Princes were unable to resist the joint influence of Austria and Russia. It was now that the government of Prussia assumed, as her favourite vocation, the supreme direction of the persecutions throughout Germany. Lists of proscription were addressed by her to the different governments, accompanied with a demand to deliver up certain individuals, their subjects, to be conducted to Koepenick. Several persons of unblemished respectability at Darmstadt were accordingly transported to that prison. Prussian emissaries were sent to the southern states of Germany to manage the inquisitions, and were particularly active at Wirtemberg, where they filled the fortress of *Hohenasperg* with their victims. This mania of persecution was carried so far as even to cause the imprisonment of literary travellers; a remarkable instance of which came to light in the case of Professor *Coussin*.

Though these persecutions, like those of 1819, proceeded in general from the same principle, that of destroying the liberal system, yet these expedients of tyranny seem at last to have produced their natural reaction. While numerous individuals have been imprisoned in consequence of the denunciations of wretches in the pay of the police, and while the government is obliged to release those who defy the depositions of these hirelings, with the humiliating acknowledgment of their innocence (as was the case with Mr Coussin), there have been momentous indications among the military, in consequence of which the Commandant of Erfurt and some other officers have been shot. It would, indeed, be amazing if this system could be carried on, without encountering an increased resistance among the many distinguished men who had imbibed a higher conception of the destiny of their country from the ministry of Stein.

It was at this inauspicious period, that the establishment of a representative chamber, promised in 1813, was at last carried into execution. We have already adverted to the notions of Von Stein on this subject. The notions of the German people were the same; and the representative systems formed in Wirtemberg, Bavaria, Darmstadt, Weimar, Baden, &c. had been modelled in some degree upon this idea. But it was the intention of Austria to reduce these bodies to the character of those in her own states, (*Landstaende*): and as early as 1819, these German representative systems were generally detached from all that could give them use or energy; the liberty of the press being extinguished, the liberal journals annihilated, liberal ideas persecuted, and liberal men imprisoned. One of the Austrian decrees of August 1824 formally demands, that the publicity and freedom of discussion in these German assemblies should be abolished, and the institutions themselves assimilated to the Austrian *Landstaende*. It was to be supposed, that, in these circumstances, the Prussian Government, which had so implicitly conformed to the wishes of Austria, would also take from that country the model of this institution; and so in substance it has. Provincial states are established in every province, and from these a central body is selected at Berlin. The composition of this representative system, its attributes, its destiny,—all possess the character, not of a national institution, but of a delusion, in a despotic government. These assemblies most obsequiously deliver their respectful *opinion* on whatever is proposed to them, and that is all: they have no shadow of a true legislative function.

We have no longer leisure to go into any of the details of

this mockery of a free constitution—though the subject is every day acquiring a more general interest. The art of organizing Representative assemblies without any particle of Political power, and of converting the forms of Legislative deliberation into engines for the suppression of free inquiry, is every hour becoming of more importance to the European tyrannies;—And there are three especial observances, by the combination of which, this great problem may be satisfactorily solved;—*first*, to limit the elective franchise to such classes or descriptions of persons as are most likely to be subservient to the possessors of power; *second*, to make the persons first elected representatives only for small local districts, and to have the general or national representation appointed, neither *by* the body of electors, nor *from* their number, but out of the members of the provincial or primary assemblies, and by the vote of their majorities;—and, *thirdly*, to make all safe, by not intrusting even to this double distilled body any real legislative power; but, by taking from it the right of withholding supplies, to reduce its functions, even in appearance, to the right of giving advice, and in reality to that of giving form and publicity to the will of the executive. All these conditions, we understand, are happily fulfilled in the new representative legislature of—Prussia, which is said to have been organized entirely with the approbation of the Austrian Cabinet, and we have no doubt will be adopted as the model for all those countries who may be adjudged by the Holy Alliance to be mature for liberal institutions.

But the times for deception are past. Scarcely a man in Prussia will be imposed upon by this shadow of representation, especially when he sees that it has been established by those who have openly espoused the principles of *legitimate* despotism, and led the way in the persecution of science, literature, and every sort of free discussion, and are every hour endeavouring, directly or indirectly, to abrogate or paralyze all that in the time of Von Stein, had been done for justice or freedom. In fact, every one of his liberal institutions is now in a state of retrogradation and discredit: The municipal system, for instance, has been modified in such a manner, that it has lost its essential characteristic, that of free management, and has been reduced to an absolute dependence on the government. The important decree, which admitted commoners to the rank of officers in the army, though it still exists nominally, is repealed in fact. During the war in 1813–15, the numerous corps of volunteers were so distributed, that a portion of them was allotted to every regiment. They had the honour to be foremost in danger; and they were assured that the officers of the regiment should be successively

chosen from among them. Thus, a great number of those volunteers, mostly commoners, attained the rank of officers in the regiments, particularly in the Guards. But after the year 1818, a commoner (plebeian) rarely became an officer: And in 1819, all plebeian officers were *eliminated* or dismissed from the first regiment of Foot Guards; and this process of elimination is now going on throughout the army.

Such is the present state of Prussia. But it cannot be a permanent state: and the time will certainly come when that power will repent that she ever sided with *Barbarism*, *Obscurancy*, and Despotism, and by participating in Austrian perfidy, forfeited that confidence by which she had been so honourably distinguished, and incurred a share of that hatred which is felt for Austria, by all enlightened nations.

ART. X.—*An Authentic Report of the Debate in the House of Commons, June 23d, 1825, on Mr Buxton's Motion relative to the Demolition of the Methodist Chapel and Mission House in Barbadoes, and the Expulsion of Mr Shrewsbury, a Wesleyan Missionary, from that Island.* 8vo. pp. 119. Hatchard, London, 1825.

THIS publication forms a most valuable addition to those accurate and copious reports of Debates on West Indian affairs, which had, from time to time, been printed by the benevolent and enlightened men who devote themselves to bettering the condition of our fellow-subjects, the Negroes in the colonies.

The outrage committed at Barbadoes had been incidentally mentioned in the memorable debate upon Mr Smith's case; and we had ourselves commented upon its extraordinary aspect, in our article upon that very interesting question. But so flagrant a case required to be separately handled. The sense of Parliament and of the mother country upon the conduct of the guilty, and no less upon the impotence of the laws, and the impunity of the worst crimes in those parts, required to be loudly expressed; the inferences from such daring and unpunished violations of all law, to the utter hopelessness of reforms in the West Indies, without a direct interference of the British Legislature, were to be drawn; and it was therefore necessary that the question should be solemnly brought before the House of Commons. It could not possibly have been intrusted to abler or more steady and honest hands than to Mr Buxton's; distinguished, as he had often shown himself to be, by a

thorough acquaintance with colonial subjects, a manly and impressive eloquence upon whatever topic he handles, and a warmth of feeling, and firmness of principle, which are calculated alike to command our sympathy, and to gain our entire confidence. The very admirable speech which occupies the principal part of the Report before us, amply justifies the selection made of him for this important service.

We mean now to lay before the reader a distinct, though somewhat abridged narrative of these truly extraordinary transactions; and we shall conclude with stating the result of the debate upon them, both as it regards the Barbadoes case itself, and as it bears upon the general state of the Slavery Question, now become of far more pressing interest than ever.

Mr Shrewsbury was for some time a Methodist minister in England. He was sent, in 1816, as a missionary to Tortola; in 1818, in the same capacity, to Grenada; and, in 1820, to Barbadoes. 'His conduct was such as entitled him to the respect of the community.' Of this let the testimonies of men not very prone to praise the demeanour of Methodist teachers, viz. Governors and Planters, speak. 'I am desired to convey to you his Excellency's approbation of your general conduct, and particularly the mild and temperate manner which has marked the exercise of your religious duties.' 'Mr Shrewsbury is a superior man, who would do honour to any church or society of Christians.'—'I can with truth testify, I never knew a more pious or better man. Possessed of natural cheerfulness of temper, and without any thing of austerity or moroseness in his manners, he discharged the duties of his profession with zeal and assiduity, and acquired the good-will and esteem of the whole community.'—'I am convinced he was eminently useful as a Christian minister, both amongst the free people and the slaves.'

These are the words of the Governors, Presidents, and chief Planters of the islands in which he served. His Majesty's ministers have heard, no doubt, from the West Indies, every thing which could be alleged against him; and the result of these communications is, that the Under Secretary of State for the colonies declared, in his place in Parliament, 'that he did not mean, for one moment, to raise any argument against the respectability of Mr Shrewsbury; the testimonials to which the honourable member (Mr Buxton) has referred, came from persons of high character, and were, on that account, entitled to every consideration, and all possible weight;' and Mr Canning, in the same debate, says, 'In the conduct of Mr Shrewsbury, I must be allowed to say, that there did not appear the slightest ground of blame or suspicion.'

Grounds of blame and suspicion then there were none—but of groundless blame and suspicion there was abundance. First, he was charged with being a correspondent of the African Institution,—that is, with the grave offence of holding some kind of intercourse with a Society which has numbered among its most active members almost every man distinguished for his virtues or his talents in our days. Of this crime, however, such as it is, he happens *not* to have been guilty. This is Mr Buxton's defence for him:—'I know he was subsequently accused of being 'an agent of "the villanous African Society," and particu'larly of corresponding with me; and I understand that per'sons in the West Indies, who ought, from their station, to be 'respectable, have asserted, that they have seen letters from him 'to me, and from me to him. My answer is, *I never received 'a letter from, or wrote a letter to, him in my life.* I did not 'know that such a man existed in the world, until I happened 'to take up a newspaper, and there read, with some astonish'ment, that he was going to be hanged for corresponding with 'me!'

The next charge was, that on his arrival at Barbadoes, he sent to the Society which employed him, a Report of the state of the congregation to which he was attached. 'It cannot be 'denied (said Mr Canning in the debate), that Mr Shrewsbury 'was at liberty to write that letter. To him, therefore, no blame 'whatever attached on account of its contents.'

We shall now see what treatment this minister of religion, confessedly unexceptionable in conduct as in character, has received in Barbadoes; and we shall follow the narrative given in the House of Commons, the correctness of which was confirmed by the Colonial Under Secretary.

On Sunday, October 5th, 1823, riot the first took place. A large concourse of persons assembled round the chapel, for the avowed purpose of disturbing the congregation. They came provided with a number of thin bottles, filled with oil, assafœtida and aquafortis, prepared, as there is every reason to think, at the shop of one of the magistrates, who is a chemist and druggist. These bottles were suddenly discharged into the midst of a congregation of some hundreds of females. One of them was aimed at Mr Shrewsbury's head, and narrowly missed its mark, but wounded another man. A second was wounded in the shoulder; and one of the bottles discharging its contents on the bosom of a Mulatto female, burnt her severely. A lawyer, Mr Newsome, chose his decorous station at the railing of the communion table, and cheered and encouraged the rioters. Two sons of the magistrate and chemist were also conspicuous-

ly active. Upon this discharge the utmost confusion arose. The females were greatly alarmed; and, in point of fact, one-third of the congregation ran away.

The next day Mr Shrewsbury offered a reward of thirty pounds for the detection of any of the rioters: But no one came forward to give evidence, and he soon found that the interruption met with general approbation. Passing by the shop of a considerable merchant, where a number of gentlemen were collected, he was assailed by such remarks as these. 'Serve the 'fellow right.' 'They ought to have gone and pulled the 'fellow from the pulpit.' And *a magistrate*, who was also a senior member of the Council, told a person of credit, that "if 'a sufficient number would join him, he would go and pull 'down the chapel at noon-day.' The name of this magistrate is Mr Staynes.

On the following Wednesday and Friday he experienced somewhat of the same kind of disturbance, but not to the same extent. On Sunday, October the 12th, while he was preparing for service, one of his congregation came to him privately and stated, that something desperate was intended that day. He, however, determined to proceed. He went down to the chapel, and he thus states what he saw. 'As I came down 'from my dwellinghouse, and entered the side-door of the 'chapel, the sight was really intimidating. Without the cha'pel, and throughout the whole length of the street, there was 'an immense concourse of people, some breathing out threat'enings and slaughter, and others merely lookers on. Within 'the chapel, besides a full congregation of my regular and 'serious hearers, there were planted all around the pulpit, and 'by the pulpit stairs, from twenty to thirty of the gentlemen-'mob, apparently ready for any mischief, when those without 'should make a beginning. Just as we arose from prayer, two 'men, *wearing masks*, having *swords and pistols*, came gallop'ing down the street; and presenting their pistols opposite the 'door, *they fired*; but only one pistol went off, and that dis'charged its contents, not within the door amongst the con'gregation, but without, beside the window, so that the men 'planted round the pulpit were completely disappointed; for 'it seems the design was to have fired crackers amongst the 'females to set their clothes on fire, when advantage would 'have been taken of the confusion, to have wreaked their ven'geance on me.'

Two officers happened to be at the chapel this evening. Their servants, who were holding their horses, attacked the masked rioters, and put them to flight. The awning of the

window burst into flames. The cry of fire was raised. The mob of gentlemen again prepared for action, but tranquillity was restored by the presence of mind exhibited by a member of the congregation, who ran in and said, 'Do not be alarmed, it is 'only a cracker.'

The next day Mr Moore, a magistrate, summoned Mr Shrewsbury before him, to answer for the offence of not having enrolled himself in the militia, a duty from which, as a licensed minister of religion, he is exempted by the Toleration Act. But what would the toleration act, or all the acts or the statutes at large have availed him? If he had ventured himself at that time in a public court, he would have fallen into the hands of the mob, and they would have torn him in pieces.

On Wednesday the 15th, as he was going to perform the usual service, he found so large a concourse of persons assembled, and holding language so alarming, that he was glad to escape to the house of a relation. An hour afterwards, a party of gentlemen, who had not heard of his escape, galloped down from the race ground; but finding the chapel closed, they contented themselves with exclaiming, 'The coward has fled! the coward has run away!'

We next have an interview between the Governor and Mr Shrewsbury, in which the former declares his inclination, but confesses his inability, to afford any protection. He, it seems, was almost as unpopular as Shrewsbury himself. He had taken rather too much notice of the murder of two slaves by their masters, and had not offered a reward for the apprehension of the murderers of a White man, who had in fact died of drinking rum. This seemed unaccountable, particularly to the Barbadians, who retained some memory of those better times, when it was declared that a Black man raising his hand against a White man in self-defence was to be hanged, and a White man murdering a Black was to be punished with a fine of 11*l.* 4s. For some reason or other, however, the Governor certainly was not in favour; and in consequence he could only recommend Mr Shrewsbury to apply to the Magistrates. The answer of the Missionary was sufficiently remarkable. 'To 'which of them shall I apply? To Mr Staynes, who said he 'could lead the way, and pull down the chapel at noon-day? To 'Mr Moore, who summoned me before the Court, when to appear was to perish? To the Magistrate at whose shop the 'bottles were prepared? To Mr Newsome, or to Mr Walton, 'junior?—to address myself to these is to address myself to the 'bitterest of my enemies.' The quarter in which he sought advice was remarkable,—he went to a most respectable clergy-

man of the established church, who advised him to apply to the Council at its next meeting, and in the interim to close his chapel. This advice he took; and on the following Sunday, Mr Shrewsbury, and as many of his congregation as he could collect, attended the established church.

Had matters stopped here, it would have furnished the most perfect sample of intolerance, save the sister case in Demerara, which has been exhibited for many a day, in any part of the British dominions. A riot, Sunday, October the 5th. A disturbance, Wednesday the 8th. A storm within and without, Friday the 10th. A very serious riot, Sunday the 12th. A public and most alarming commotion, Wednesday the 15th; and by Sunday the 19th, the chapel closed, the preacher fled, his congregation dispersed, or collected within the walls of the church. No interference on the part of the military, no protection from the Magistrates, no succour from the Governor, no symptom that there was such a thing as law in Barbadoes! Had it stopped there, it would have deserved indeed the name only of a riot—but a riot of the worst spirit; and considering *where* it was, in the heart of a Negro population—*when* it was, at the moment that the minds of the Negros were agitated by rumours of conceded liberty, a riot of the most dangerous kind. But, subsequent events cast all these trangressions into the shade. The disorder assumed a new form, and exhibited a contempt of law, a defiance of authority, which changes the name and the character of the transaction. On Friday the 17th, a secret committee had met and issued a circular, which, for distinction's sake, shall be called *Proclamation the First*. It states, that the Gentry and inhabitants of Barbadoes had determined to meet on the following Sunday, for *the purpose of pulling down the Methodist Chapel*; and it invites the person to whom it was addressed to appear in his place, properly provided. The proclamation had its effect. They met. They met in great numbers; and it is material to observe, that they were directed to meet, and they did meet, '*armed* to resist the military.' They broke open the windows and doors of the chapel, destroyed the benches, pews, and pulpit, and tore and trod under foot, a large collection of bibles and tracts, intended for the use of the Negroes and the school. They then stormed the dwelling-house of Mr Shrewsbury, destroyed every article of furniture, chopped in pieces the tables and the chairs, unroofed the house, and, making a flag of his linen, which they had collected, waived it in the air three times, and gave three cheers. It being now twelve o'clock at night, and they having been occupied laboriously for five hours, they adjourned until seven o'clock the next evening.

At that time they met according to appointment,—in the same number, with the same spirit, with the same discipline, and completed the demolition of the chapel.

The victory thus attained, was joyfully anounced to the public in various ways. The editor of a colonial newspaper thus heads *his* remarks on the occasion. '*High-handed work.* The 'Methodist chapel in Bridgetown has shared the fate of the 'Temple of Jerusalem—not one stone is left on another.'

The insurgents then print and issue their '*Second Proclamation*,' of which the following is a close copy.

'Great and signal triumph over Methodism, and total destruction of the Chapel ! ! !

'*Bridgetown, Tuesday, October* 21*st*, 1823.

'The inhabitants of this island are respectfully informed, 'that, in consequence of the unmerited and unprovoked attacks which have been repeatedly made upon the community 'by the Methodist Missionaries (otherwise known as agents to '*the villanous African Society*), a party of *respectable Gentlemen* formed the resolution of closing the Methodist concern 'altogether. With this view, they commenced their labours 'on Sunday evening; and they have the greatest satisfaction in 'announcing, that by twelve o'clock last night *they effected the total destruction of the chapel.* To this information they have 'to add, that the Missionary made his escape yesterday afternoon, in a small vessel, for St Vincent, thereby avoiding that 'expression of the public feeling towards him personally, which 'he had so richly deserved. It is to be hoped, that, as this information will be circulated throughout the different islands 'and colonies, all persons who consider themselves true lovers 'of religion will follow the laudable example of the Barbadians, 'in putting an end to Methodism and Methodist chapels throughout the West Indies.'

The next day the Governor offers a reward for the detection of the rioters, which calls forth '*Proclamation the Third.*' It runs thus:—

'*Bridgetown, Barbadoes, October* 23*d*, 1823.

'Whereas a proclamation having appeared, &c. Public 'notice is hereby given to such person or persons who may 'feel inclined, either from pecuniary temptation or vindictive feeling, that, *should they attempt to come forward* to 'injure, in any shape, any individual, *they shall receive that punishment* which their crime will justly deserve.'— 'They are to understand, that to impeach is not to convict,

'and that the reward offered will only be given upon convic-'tion, *which cannot be effected* whilst the people are firm to 'themselves. And whereas it may appear to those persons who 'are unacquainted with the circumstances which occasioned the 'said proclamation, that the demolition of the Chapel was ef-'fected by the rabble of this community, in order to create a-'narchy, riot, and insubordination, to trample upon the laws 'of the country, and to subvert good order; it is considered 'an imperative duty to repel the charge, and to state, *firstly*, 'that the majority of persons assembled, were *of the first 'respectability*, and were supported by the concurrence of 'nine-tenths of the community; *secondly*, that their motives 'were patriotic and loyal, namely, to eradicate from this soil 'the germ of Methodism, which was spreading its baneful in-'fluence over a certain class, and which ultimately would have 'injured both Church and State. With this view the Chapel 'was demolished, and the *villanous* preacher, who headed it, 'and belied us, was compelled by a speedy flight to remove 'himself from the island. With a fixed determination, there-'fore, to put an end to Methodism in this island, all Methodist 'preachers are *warned not to approach our shores*, as, if they 'do, it will be at their own peril.—God save the King and the 'People '

Now, we request our readers' attention to this curious document, bearing in mind that it comes from a body who were in arms to resist the military. The first paragraph says, 'Obey the laws if you dare;' the second intimates, that any impeachment of the rioters would be as useless as it was dangerous. It says, in effect, 'We *the rioters* are also *the jurymen*, and firm to each other.' The third passage is still more remarkable. It first modestly suggests that it might possibly appear to those unacquainted with the circumstances, that the demolition of the Chapel was effected by the rabble, in order to create riot, and insubordination, to trample on the laws of the country, and to subvert good order!' No doubt, it does wear this appearance. Nothing ever looked more like anarchy, riot, insubordination, the subversion of good order, and the downfal of the laws. But this, it seems, is entirely an error. Motives truly patriotic and loyal, a zeal for Church and State, an honourable patriotism, which nine-tenths of the community knew how to appreciate, prompted *Gentlemen of the first respectability* to execute this notable service for their country!

The House of Commons, however, has not put quite the same favourable construction on their proceedings. One gentleman connected with the colonial department did indeed

hint, that he could offer an apology for the acts of the rioters. He ascribed those acts, some how or other, to an intrinsic respect for religion; and his speech was thus alluded to by Mr Brougham.

'According to the Honourable Gentleman, they had been betrayed by their feelings into the course they had pursued. In an amiable excess of sensibility, they had only burnt down a chapel,—only made a great riot,—only levied war against the King, and committed high treason! The Honourable Gentleman certainly allowed that the act was much to be lamented; and he also lamented the cause of the act. This amiable indiscretion, it seemed, was occasioned by a wish to preserve their property, on the part of those who committed it. "Just as if a man," said Mr Brougham, "professing merely to protect his own purse, should indiscreetly, but through a pardonable, if not an amiable indiscretion, take mine." To protect their own property, these amiable but indiscreet persons went and destroyed a meeting-house belonging to others:—and then, these offences, committed day after day, and night after night, were absolutely gloried in by their perpetrators, and called the triumph of true religion! They ransacked, pulled down, burnt, destroyed, demolished the property of others, were nearly committing murder, and did commit treason—and all to give a triumph to "true religion." Excesses had often been perpetrated in the name of religion, as well as of liberty; but never before, even in the most barbarous times, had that sacred name been more prostituted than in Barbadoes.'—(*Debate*, p. 92.)

We now turn to the fortunes of Mr Shrewsbury. After escaping his pursuers, by hiding himself in various places, he contrived to leave the Island in a small vessel, taking with him his wife, who was on the eve of her confinement. She was taken ill on board the vessel, and was delivered shortly after her arrival at St Vincent's. The first work to which Mr Shrewsbury applied himself was to write a letter to his congregation in Barbadoes. And a letter more truly admirable was never penned by a Christian minister. He touches but slightly upon his sudden departure, as if fearful that this would prove an irritating topic; but he dwells at large upon the obedience and submission due from slaves to their masters.

'Be patient towards all men. Never speak disrespectfully of any in authority, nor revilingly of any one who injures you. Whatever you are called to suffer, I beseech you to take it patiently. In general, it will be best for you to be wholly silent. From the affection you bear towards me, you will perhaps find it difficult to refrain when you hear me spoken against; but your wisest plan will be to hold your peace, for you would be in great danger of speaking with undue warmth, were you to undertake to defend my character. You that are slaves will, I hope, be exceedingly careful "to adorn

the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Let no slave who is a Methodist be dishonest, or lazy, or impertinent, either in speech or behaviour; but let every one be sober, honest, industrious, and useful to his owner, even as we have taught you, both in public and in private, from day to day. And as to political matters, whether ye be bond or free, never meddle with them; but mind higher and better things, the things relating to God and eternity. Never speak slightingly of the regular clergy. In this respect, imitate the example I set you while I dwelt among you.'

The Governor of St Vincent's felt considerably embarrassed by the arrival of a visitor under such strange circumstances, and suspended him from the exercise of his clerical duties till he could learn the true cause of his flight from Barbadoes. Thither accordingly another missionary, Mr Rayner, was sent: But he was not permitted to land. He learnt, according to the narrative, at one time, that 'it was proposed to burn the vessel; at another, that boats were to be manned from the shore, to drag him from the vessel, and put him to death.' And Mr Walton, junior, then a magistrate—but not now a magistrate; for he has met with an unfortunate accident—having been caught one night in company with Mr Newsome, the lawyer, in the act of breaking the windows of a hearer of the Methodists, and, in consequence, ceased to be a magistrate—this Mr Walton came on board the vessel, and gave them a second edition of the proclamation. He warned Mr Rayner to be gone in four and twenty hours, or he must take the consequences: And so alarmed was the captain, that he removed from Carlisle Bay, where he had anchored under the guns of a fort. The officers of the vessel, however, waited on several of the most respectable proprietors. Some they found so terrified, by the menaces against Shrewsbury and his supporters, that they were afraid to give any written testimonial. Others, more daring, under a pledge of the concealment of their names, ventured to declare, that a more peaceful and disinterested, and prudent minister of religion, they had never seen.

Their documents were delivered to the Governor, Sir C. Brisbane, who then communicated to Mr Shrewsbury that he was at liberty to preach in any part of his government. The next Barbadian act was an embassy. The '*Club of Brothers*,' who had given such unexceptionable proofs of their attachment to Church and State, by insulting religion and committing treason, sent certain chosen deputies to admonish the true lovers of religion in the neighbouring islands to follow their laudable example. This band of agitators, 10 in number, landed first at Tobago, but were commanded to quit the Island in an hour; and next at Trinidad, where the Governor ordered them off

in five minutes. To Grenada they went, but they did not land there; for they found a body of soldiers on the shore ready to apprehend them; and these gentlemen, on returning from their mission, had to tell the astonished Barbadians, that their neighbours were actually so far behind the inhabitants of '*Little England*,' and, withal, so unaccountably dull, as to deem resistance to the military and defiance of the Governor, as not being the perfection of loyalty; nor the destruction of a chapel, and the persecution of an innocent family, the height of true piety. But, if they were unable to extend their alliances abroad as they could have wished, at home they were absolutely triumphant. No Methodist was allowed to preach, no missionary was permitted to land, and *no man was brought to account* for past outrages.

But nothing shows so demonstratively the inveteracy of the passions predominant in this slave island, as the fact, that their fury—with nothing to feed on—survived a whole year of tranquillity. The destruction of this chapel took place on the 19th of October 1823. It was determined to celebrate the 19th of October 1824 by a similar outrage; and an old woman, who was guilty of nothing but an anxiety to instruct the negroes, was selected as the victim. We state this almost incredible instance of relentless ferocity, on the authority of the Governor's despatch, dated December 2d 1824, which runs thus:—'It was 'intended, and *proclaimed most publicly*, to meet in honour of '*the anniversary* of the destruction of the Methodist chapel, '*and to pull down a house* belonging to a coloured Methodist 'woman!' By this time our readers must be pretty well aware of the kind of spirit which rages in Barbadoes; but even they will be startled with the tenor of this '*Fourth Proclamation.*' It is signed 'Rock.' We remember seeing a manifesto of that celebrated personage while he resided in Ireland, addressed to a Scotch farmer who had hired a farm in a southern county —which runs thus—'My honey—plase to leave the farm of 'Ballibrig on Tuesday next—you and yours at 2 o'c.—or I 'will murder you—and lash you into the bargain. Sure enough 'I will, my darling, 'Rock.'

The gallant Captain retains, in the West Indies, all his soft and loving methods of persuasion. His proclamation states, that the actors in the former scene have formed themselves into a 'Committee of Public Safety,' and have taken the name of '*The Worthy*.' He then invites *The Worthy* to meet in 'love and harmony,' on the 19th of October, to dine together, and *after dinner to proceed to pull down a house*, 'where Methodism begins again to rear its hideous head.'—'Come armed,' it

continues, 'that in case any of the pest should resist, they may be sent to sleep with their forefathers!' They are animated to their enterprise by the memory of the former 19th of October, 'a day more dear to true Barbadians than Trafalgar to Britons!' The whole concludes with a solemn oath to extirpate Methodists and Methodism from the island *by fire and sword. 'So help us our God.'* (*Signed*) 'ROCK.'

The Peep-of-day Boys—the Moonlighters—the Ribbonmen—the Caravats—all the Worthies of Connaught, famous in their day, must hide their diminished heads. Their annals can furnish nothing so sublime as this—so magnificent a combination of love and massacre—arson and jollity.

Our readers must be already so satiated with this history of bigotted violence, that but for the sake of putting them in possession of the whole case, we should not mention, that in April last the Missionary Society sent some of their number to Barbadoes to rebuild the chapel. This they did with the express concurrence of Lord Bathurst. That Nobleman, it is evident, was not aware of the excess of acrimony which prevailed there. We do not blame him. The most rooted misanthrope would have blushed to charge by anticipation such continued excesses on any body of reasonable beings. He therefore assures the Missionary Society, that they may with perfect security return to Barbadoes. He was, however, mistaken. The Barbadoes papers, which arrived the day before the debate, declare, that not a man was permitted to land from the Government vessel which brought them; and the penalty attached to the transgression of this mob-law was *death!*

Upon Lord Bathurst every term of reproach is lavished. This attempt to afford protection to the Methodists, is described as 'the most unlooked for, uncalled for, absurd and dangerous 'measure ever contemplated by a British Minister.'—'The 'genius of Puritanism' (it is added), 'has spread in malign 'influence over the whole Cabinet.' This, at least, is new to us. We have not been accustomed to hear of 'that Puritan,' Lord Eldon,—'that saint,' Lord Westmoreland,—'that second Praise-God-Barebones,' the Member for the University of Oxford.

The old Mulatto woman, suspected, like her less sable accomplices in the Cabinet, and, perhaps, with better reason, of praying, preaching, and teaching, was rescued from the violence of the mob by the Governor. She is, however, doomed to destruction. '*The House of Assembly*' (says the Barbadian newspapers of April last) 'have *ordered a prosecution* to be 'instituted against a Mulatto woman, for holding meetings of

'this description; whilst his Excellency the Governor, in com-'pliance with Earl Bathurst's instructions, has issued a second 'circular to the Magistrates, calling upon them to afford every 'protection in their power, even aided by the military, *to the 'Reverend Vagabonds* above alluded to—which to us has a very 'portentous meaning, and which may God in his infinite mercy 'avert!!!'

The mob, it seems, restrained from those more effective solemnities which are due to 'the day so dear to true Barba-'dians,' were obliged to content themselves with a mock execution. A gallows was erected, on which the following persons were suspended and burnt in effigy. First, Mr Wilberforce; secondly, Mr Buxton; thirdly, Mr Shrewsbury; fourthly, a lady who had the courage to offer a reward for the detection of the rioters; and, fifthly, a personage, about whose identity there is some dispute. Some say it was Lord Bathurst, while others maintain it was Mr Stephen. We incline to the latter opinion. If bold and unflinching detestation of slavery, and the ablest and most accurate exposure of its horrors, entitle any man to the honours of cremation, Mr Stephen, with his book in his hand, is more than a match for any competitor; and is as sure of it in the New World, as his illustrious namesake, the Proto-Martyr of the Church, was in the Old.

We have now led our readers through the whole of this '*High-handed work*.' They have seen that a general invitation was given to the inhabitants of Barbadoes to meet and pull down the chapel; and that they do meet, armed to resist the military, and pull the chapel down. They issue proclamations and counter-proclamations; send emissaries of sedition to their neighbours; form a committee of public safety, in imitation of the French, and enlist Captain Rock in their service, after the example of the Irish. A meeting is appointed on that day twelvemonths, where the proposed entertainment is the destruction of a house, the persecution of an old woman, and the transmission of those who should resist to the graves of their forefathers,—which, in the less sounding language of the law, is termed Murder. At the end of eighteen months, they forbid his Majesty's vessel, bearing men, especially declared to be under his Majesty's protection, to approach their coast!

Above all it is to be remembered, that these acts are the first answer made by the colonies to the Resolutions of the House of Commons on the subject of Slavery. We have in vain racked our recollections for an instance of such an insult offered to the feelings of the people of England. We question whether Parliament was ever before bearded with such uncompromising

defiance:—At any rate we must go back to the days of the Long Parliament to find, what, after all, is a very inadequate parallel. That Parliament addressed a letter to Lord Derby, offering him his own terms if he would surrender the Isle of Man. His indignant answer was,—'I have received your letter with indignation, and answer it with scorn. I scorn your threats, I disdain your favours, I hate your puritanical treasons. Take this final answer, and forbear all further solicitation; for if you trouble me with any more messages, I will burn your letter and hang its bearer. This is the unalterable resolution, and shall be the the undoubted practice of 'DERBY.'

The Barbadian mob—we crave their pardon—all the persons of greatest respectability in Barbadoes—say to Lord Bathurst: You order the Governor to call out the military—we scorn your threats. You send us missionaries—we disdain your favours—we hate your puritanical compliances. Take this final answer, and forbear any further solicitations; for if you trouble us with any more of your methodistical messages, we will hang the bearer, and burn the letter, and yourself in effigy into the bargain. This is the fixed determination, and will doubtless be the undoubted practice, of the 'true friends of religion' in Barbadoes.

Such is the extraordinary case which Mr Buxton, with distinguished talent and the most honest and manly zeal, brought before Parliament. His statement made a deep impression upon the House, and put to flight all idea, if any such had been previously entertained, of opposing his motion, which was for a plain expression of indignation, a compulsory reparation of the wrong done, and a pledge of future protection to Missionaries and other teachers.

Mr Canning, after a most ineffectual attempt at palliation, not certainly at justification, by Mr W. Horton, avowed distinctly his opinion respecting their strange proceedings.

'Of the transaction itself, to which the papers on the table of the House related, it was impossible that there should be more than *one* opinion: namely, that it was unjustifiable, indefensible—*a violation of Law and Justice*—a defiance of all legal authority—a flying in the face of Parliament, and of the country. [Hear, hear! from both sides of the House.] In every expression of *abhorence* at so great an outrage, *he fully concurred* with the Honourable Member for Weymouth; and, if he differed from that Honourable gentleman in opinion, as to the mode in which the House ought to proceed upon the occasion, that difference was solely founded on practical considerations, arising out of the circumstances of the case, and not upon a favourable estimate of the character of the transaction itself.'

He moved an amendment upon the original motion, which was adopted by the mover and his supporters, and *passed unanimously*. It was in these words.

'That the House deem it their duty to declare, that they view with *the utmost indignation that scandalous and daring violation of the Law*; and having seen with great satisfaction the instructions which have been sent out by His Majesty's Secretary of State to the Governor of Barbadoes, to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages, they humbly assure his Majesty of their readiness to concur in every measure which his Majesty may deem necessary, for securing ample protection, and religious toleration, to all his Majesty's subjects in that part of his Majesty's dominions.'

The promulgation in the colonies of so unequivocal and unanimous a declaration of Parliament, cannot fail, we should think, to produce a salutary effect. But Mr Buxton's motion gave rise to another circumstance, of the greatest importance in the history of West Indian affairs, beside demonstrating from the conduct of the Barbadians the futility of expecting any self-reformation in the colonies. The pertinacity with which the colonial legislatures (as they are termed) reject all the advices of their own friends, and all the warnings of their vigilant adversaries, attracted once more the notice of the House. It was found that the year, which had then elapsed since such subjects were discussed in Parliament, had passed, like so many others, with nothing, or indeed worse than nothing, done to redeem the pledges so often given to serve the purpose of the hour. The papers on the table of the House showed clearly how hopeless any expectation was in that quarter. Some bishops and other dignitaries of the church had, it seems, been sent out,—as if a fine aristocratic establishment were the fit instrument for converting the poor Negroes, and enlightening their minds by hourly instruction—as if gentlemen from Oxford and Cambridge were the fittest teachers and the best missionaries among those benighted heathens. One of them, Bishop Lipscomb, had, after a few weeks residence, transmitted a Report, as little marked by sound and sober sense, as his conduct had been by decorous impartiality. The first act of his administration was to gratify the planters, by appointing for his chaplain a reverend gentleman only known to the world by his foul libels upon the character of Mr Wilberforce,—and the first report which he sends home is filled with crude and hasty, but very dogmatical assertions, that the established church alone is in favour with the slaves, and that all sectaries are held in contempt—although the reports of former priests who had spent their lives there, and had the experience of at least as many years as his Lordship

had days, concurred in representing the sectarian missionaries as alone capable of instructing the Negroes.

But the proceedings of the planters and their legislatures are of more importance than the High Church reveries of this new made diocesan. In Trinidad the enforcement of the Order in Council has been resisted and thwarted in every way, short of actual violence. In none of the islands has the great, and safe, and obvious improvement been carried, of making the Negro's evidence admissible in courts of justice. In only one colony, Jamaica, has this reform been *attempted*; and the history of that effort is very instructive. A bill was brought in by one of the most respectable and leading members of the Assembly, to make that evidence receivable, in certain limited cases. The measure proposed was most imperfect; it went but a little way towards remedying the existing defects of the law; yet as far as it went, it was a manifest improvement. The Governor, the Duke of Manchester, in a despatch written after the leave was given to bring in the bill, congratulates the government at home, upon the speedy prospect of a measure so recommended being carried. But soon after came the question of the first reading; and on a division, there appeared, of thirty-five members present, and voting, just thirty-four against it, and *a single voice* in its favour! If, after this, any man shall persist in 'hoping all things, and believing all things,'—nay, in hoping or believing *any thing* of the Colonial legislatures, he certainly cannot say that *they* have misled him, and occasioned his disappointment.

In consequence of these and similar facts, Mr Brougham, with the entire concurrence of all those who take a part against slavery in the Parliamentary proceedings, either by their speeches or their votes, gave formal notice of his intention to redeem the pledge given upon the debate respecting the Missionary Smith. This he stated he should do, by bringing in a bill early in the next Session, if nothing were in the meanwhile done by the Islands to render such an interference unnecessary.

'This measure (he said) will embrace the following distinct objects:—

'First, To make Negro evidence admissible in all cases, in all courts, leaving of course its credit to the consideration of the court and jury:

'Secondly, To prevent the use of the whip, as applied to women, entirely; and as a stimulus to labour, whether for men or women:

'Thirdly, To attach all slaves to the soil, rendering them inseparable from it, in any circumstances:

'Fourthly, To prohibit persons holding West-India property, or any mortgage upon such property, filling any office, civil or military, (except regimental) in the West-Indies:

'And, lastly, To secure, by such means as may be safe at once to the owner and the slave, the gradual, but, ultimately, the complete admission of that injured class of men to the blessings of personal liberty.

'If I am alive," continued the honourable Gentleman, "and in parliament, I will, early next session, move you for leave to bring in this bill. I know that I shall have the zealous support of almost all who sit around me. I trust I shall have the concurrence of a majority of the House. I am sure I shall have with me the great body of the people, out of doors. Nor, should *I* be wanting, will this measure be abandoned. It is the result of mature deliberation: it is the fruit of extensive concert: it is now pressed forward after long delay, and great forbearance: and, as it signifies little to whose hands the proposal is intrusted, so by some one or other will it surely be brought forward, even if I am no longer here present to discharge this duty; and, unless the West-Indians shall of themselves prevent it, let them be well assured that it will, sooner or later, but probably at no distant day, be carried.'

That so important a measure will be zealously supported in the country, we cannot for a moment doubt. Already, that benevolent sect, the Quakers, have appeared at their post. It is said that a large vote of money was passed at their Annual Meeting, held in June and July last, for encouraging and assisting the views of those who look to the extirpation of Slavery; and we cannot better close this article, than by citing the passage in their Annual Epistle, which refers to this great question. After earnestly recommending, on all occasions, works of active benevolence, it proceeds thus. 'No subject of this description has more interested our feelings than the continuance of the Slave-trade, *and the degraded condition of those who are kept in bondage.* In the course of our present deliberations, the *cruelties of this horrid system* of injustice have afresh called forth our deep commiseration; and we earnestly desire, notwithstanding the slow progress that is made in this great cause, that no discouragement may prevail; but rather that all may be incited to labour with greater zeal for *the utter Abolition of the Slave trade and of Slavery.*'

While we are writing this, we find the independence of Hayti acknowledged by the French Government, on condition that France shall enjoy almost a monopoly of the trade, and shall receive a very large sum of money from Hayti. Here is another sacrifice which we have made to colonial prejudices. St Domingo was, if we are to credit West Indian authori-

ties, relapsing into barbarism,—sinking fast under an odious combination of the darkness, ferocity, vices and superstitions, of all colours and of all nations, unredeemed by the virtues of any. Its population, according to the same authorities, was diminishing; its trade all but extinct. And now, by a singular fatality, at the very moment we are called on to admit the conclusiveness of this argument against all efforts to better the condition of the Blacks, out comes an official Report, proving that the population, which, in 1805, was 400,000, is now 935,335—being just 535,335 beyond the highest number at which Mr M'Queen (to whom the House of Assembly in Barbadoes have voted 500*l.* for his services) rated it last year. Forth comes also a Report of the trade of Port-au-Prince, the chief, but very far from being the only, port in the island, showing that from thence, in 1824, was exported

19,478,022 lib. of Coffee,
871,085 — Cotton,
821,629 — Logwood,

beside a multitude of other articles; and that a duty was paid to the Negro Government, from that single port, in a single year, of D.1,197,427. Forth comes also a Treaty with France, by which the latter sells the sovereignty of that island, for a very large sum it is true (a price greatly too high in proportion to her power of withholding the grant), and by which she is further to enjoy, and the British nation is to be despoiled of, a very large and thriving trade. This is some portion of what we pay for that contemptuous disregard of the Negro character which has been inculcated, and for those gross and shameless mistatements which have been circulated by the advocates of slavery. But this is by no means the last sacrifice we shall have to make. France lost St Domingo by the policy she adopted towards the people of colour; and we are making rapid advances towards alienating the affections of the whole Mulatto population of the Antilles. Mr Shrewsbury had collected a large congregation of Mulattoes and Blacks. In the words of the rioters, 'Methodism had begun to spread its baneful influence over *a certain class.*' The chapel, therefore, was pulled down, the minister exiled, the members persecuted. Can any one be so blind as not to see, that if such outrages are continued, the loyalty of the *free* coloured population will be shaken, and that they will contrast their servile state with the freedom of their neighbours? Hitherto they have conducted themselves with the most exemplary moderation. But that they are not insensible spectators of the injuries and insults heaped upon them, is manifested by a single circumstance. *One* of their

number joined the persecutors of Shrewsbury;—and with him no free coloured person has held any intercourse, or exchanged a single syllable *since* that transaction.

But we would fain hope, that the day is not distant in which justice shall be dealt out to the Black and the Coloured inhabitants of the British West Indies. Dr Lushington has already brought forward in Parliament the case of Lescerne and Escoffery; and we trust that most able, consistent, and strenuous friend of liberty in all countries, and of all colours, will not stop till he has accomplished a revision of the whole law, as it affects the coloured population. Of the far larger and more alarming inroad on slavery meditated by Mr Brougham, we have already spoken; and on these two measures we earnestly desire to fix the best attention of all our readers, during the present recess, that every one may be aiding, out of doors, to the Parliamentary friends and leaders in the cause.

But by far the most important and disgusting feature in the whole case is, the view which it affords of the character and temper of the colonists—the lawless and unmanly violence of 'the respectable' perpetrators of the outrage, and *the perfect impunity* they have enjoyed.—We have endeavoured, in a preceding paragraph, to illustrate the bold defiance of authority which those proceedings evince, by comparing it with Lord Derby's famous letter to the republican parliament. And so far the resemblance runs smoothly, but at that point it halts. The insult in the one case came from a chivalrous though misguided spirit, and was addressed to a parliament whose title was new, and by the writer might be questioned. In the other it comes from an usurping mob, and is addressed to the minister of a long established government. There is this further difference. The letter of Lord Derby cost its author his life and his estate: for he had the misfortune to live in the days of the Cromwells and Blakes. The authors of the colonial insult enjoy untouched impunity; for their contemporaries, happily for them, are more scrupulous and yielding. And here across the scene of these outrageous acts, it is impossible to avoid casting a look upon the story of the unhappy men who expiated their virtues on the blood-stained field of Guiana, and to count the mighty difference between the fate that awaits the White and the Black—or rather the slave owner, and the slaves' friend, whatever be his hue—if charged with the same crimes. The same *crimes!* There was nothing like a crime committed by the missionary at Demerara, nothing like a grave offence by the slaves. The negroes struck work; the blundering indecision of their rulers, and the seditious squabbles

of the constituted authorities, occasioned among them a belief that they were freed. To ascertain this, they took steps which in England would have been punished with a month's imprisonment, and straightway the land streamed with blood! Hundreds were massacred in the field,—scores were drawn to be shot by the hand of justice—and torture was inflicted on the rest by tearing their flesh from their bones. What fate would have been theirs, had those poor oppressed children of darkness but dared to plan one hundredth part of the riot, which has been carried into effect, *with entire and triumphant impunity*, by the pampered civilized Christian people of Barbadoes? The question is bootless; what fate more cruel than they underwent for nothing, *could* have been devised for them, if their crimes had been as heavy as those of their unpunished oppressors? But the missionary! but Smith! think of his case—of his trial—his sentence—his torments—his death! And the offence wherewithal they charged him, was the not conveying to government, with the swiftness of the telegraph, imperfect and equivocal information of some movement that threatened the public peace! For this—for not doing what was physically impossible—*he* was adjudged by cruel and lawless men to be hanged by the neck till he was dead. For acts of *open rebellion* perpetrated in the face of the day—for *murder* attempted—*felony* committed—*sedition* so glaringly spread through the community, that it clothed itself with the forms of the insulted law, and mocked the powers of civil constituted authority—for all things done by White men—not the hair of one White man's head has been touched! The Missionary to whose care the peace of God and not of the King was committed, was hunted to death by the perverted forms of a trial, for not having told what he half and undoubtfully knew, in a space of time far too short to tell it. The Magistrates of Barbadoes, charged by the oath and the forms of their office with the protection of the King's peace, knowing all that was doing, and the design that was formed by the insurgents, but suppressing all they knew * until the whole

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* The following passage in Mr Buxton's speech, states from the papers on the table of the House, this astounding and otherwise wholly incredible fact.

'Mr Smith knew that a disturbance was approaching, half an hour, as some witnesses say, a quarter of an hour as others depose—before the insurrection began. That is *his* crime. The Magistrates of Barbadoes were summoned before the Council, and asked, "Did you know that a riotous assembly had collected at the Wesleyan Chapel, for the purpose of pulling down that building, and that they were ac-

crime was committed, were visited for their whole punishment with a simple expression of '*His Excellency's displeasure!*'

There are cases in which the facts so far surpass all imagination, that the effect of the bare story is only weakened by reflections. Assuredly if ever such an instance occurred, it is to be found in the contrast between the fate of the Demerara pastor, and the privileged orders of Barbadoes.

ART. XI. *An Address, delivered at the Establishment of the Mechanics' Institution, Ashton-under-Lyne, June 22, 1825.* By Mr CHARLES HINDLEY. Ashton-under-Lyne. Cunningham, 1825.

THIS sensible and useful Address was, as the title imports, delivered on one of the occasions, happily very frequent during the course of the present year, the opening of a Mechanics' Institution. Since we last treated of this most important subject, and endeavoured to administer consolation to the wounded spirit of the High Church party and others lovers of darkness, many similar establishments have been formed. The desire of knowledge spreads with each effort made to satisfy it. The sacred thirst of science is becoming epidemic; and we look forward to the day when the laws of matter and of mind shall be known to all men; when an acquaintance with

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tually engaged in destroying it?" "*I did*"—is the answer of every Magistrate who was in town at the time. So far, then, they stand in a parity of guilt.

'Mr Smith did something. He remonstrated with the rioters, till his remonstrances were checked by a presented blunderbuss: and still he saved the life of Hamilton the manager. "Did you," the Magistrates are asked, "make any effort to disperse the meeting, and prevent the destruction of the Chapel?" "Did you, Mr Gill?" "I used no effort."—"Did you, Mr Wickham? "I used no effort."—"Did you, Mr Grant?" "I used no effort on either of those nights."—"Did you, Mr Walton?" "I used no effort on either of those nights."—"Did you, Mr Waith?" "I made no effort, aware that it was useless." Here, then, Mr Smith has the advantage of the Magistrates. He did something; they nothing.

'Mr Smith made no communication to the Governor—the time and the distance rendering it physically impossible. The Magistrates are asked, "Did you make any communication to the Governor on the subject?" "I made no communication to him," is the answer of them all.

them shall no longer be deemed as heretofore the distinction of a few superior minds; any more than being able to read or write now constitutes, as it once did, the title to scholarship.

It is singular enough that a personage of high note in the dark-loving school * had scarcely given his ingenuous opinion to the other members of his party, that they should *first* try all they could to put down infant schools, but, if this was found impracticable, that they should *then* take the management of them into their own hands, when two Right Reverend prelates, likewise most distinguished ornaments of the same sect, stept forth in the city of London, *and founded an Infant school.* This, we think, may be taken as a conclusive proof that such institutions are safe from all further attacks; that they can no longer be put down by misrepresentation and clamour, but must henceforth be patronized by the High Church party, whether they will or no. We look forward, we confess, with confident hope to a similar consummation attending the Mechanics' Institutions; and feel already assured that their rapid and general diffusion will, upon the same principle, compel the enemies of knowledge to take part, for their own sakes, with the prevailing taste—and yield to the current, lest it sweep them and their portion of other men's flocks away. They will do so doubtless with a very bad grace—but 'tythe is sweet,'—and they will do it!

In all, or almost all, the Institutions lately formed, it is truly gratifying to observe the sound principles which have been adopted. The whole body of contributors and subscribers are on the same footing, of members and proprietors; the management is intrusted to committees, of which two-thirds at the least must be working mechanicks; and the funds are, as much as possible, raised by the subscriptions of the working classes, in order to secure the permanency of the Institutions, and to avoid the feeling of dependence. These are the true fundamental principles of this important system. They are all recognised in the rules of the Ashton Establishment now before us; and the last of the three is well commented upon in Mr Hindley's Address. 'You are not' (says he) 'to imagine that this Institution is, in the common acceptation of the word, a CHARITABLE one; that it is an offering on the part of the rich and the learned, to the poor and the ignorant. No! it is an Institution which requires from all its members value received

* The *Misophotists*, or light-haters, the *Misosophers*, or *Philozophers*, that is, the lovers of darkness,—or, to avoid the ambiguity of the single letter that distinguishes them, the *Scotophilists*.

'in return for the advantages it offers. The higher classes of 'society come forward at first to extend the hand of *encouragement*, not of *charity*; and the feeling with which that encouragement is received on the part of the poor, needs have 'no mixture of the dependence and the shame which is always 'the companion of the almsman on the rich man's bounty.'

The example of the original London Institution has, as might be expected, been followed in the metropolis. Under the auspices of Mr Gibson, and other most respectable individuals, an Institution has been formed for the Eastern parts of the city, in the Spitalfields district, and we believe that steps have been taken to establish one in Southwark.

Among the remoter parts of the country, Northumberland certainly stands conspicuous. Mr Losh, the zealous and enlightened friend of every good work, himself a man filled with various and useful knowledge, and whom an habitual love of classical literature has only made the more anxious for the education of the people—Mr Turner, who among the first, years ago opened the doors of his Lecture-room to the mechanics, and who is not more distinguished as a pious and learned divine, than as an acute natural philosopher; with others whose names would, had we space, adorn our pages, have so strenuously exerted themselves in this great labour, that we understand there is not now a single market-town in the country without a Mechanics' Institution, excepting Afton; and there, proceedings have been commenced for founding one. The gratuitous lectures of Mr Turner at Newcastle are very numerously attended by the mechanics, whose attention and regularity are highly commended by the learned professor. How truly *pious* is this discharge of his duty! How greatly to be esteemed, beyond the waste of temper, as well as of precious time, in bootless controversy! How infinitely to be prized, before the base and sordid spirit that seeks emolument by affecting a zeal about civil or ecclesiastical distinctions, or licking the dust trodden under the feet of those who hold the keys of preferment!

The suggestions that had been circulated from London through the country, have been effectual to another good purpose; the extension of similar associations to country labourers as well as artisans. Farmers' book-clubs have been formed in several places; and we trust that the excellent plan of circulating libraries, adopted in East Lothian, that is, libraries which are transferred from one village to another in succession, and used by the inhabitants both of the villages and the neighbouring country, will be imitated elsewhere.

The system indeed appears to be working in every direction, and in remote and inconsiderable places. In spring a beginning was made at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, a town of very moderate size, containing only about 4000 inhabitants. A Tradesman's and Mechanic's Library was formed, under very judicious regulations, the subscription being six shillings a year, or 1s. 6d. per quarter. The number of members soon exceeded 200; and by means of donations, the library in a few months consisted of 500 volumes. There is nothing more useful than to promote the practice of such donations. Almost every man who has a few shelves full of books, has some volume or two useless to him, either as duplicates, early editions, or works the contents of which others present in a better form. The movers in founding an institution, should bestir themselves to obtain gifts of these books, which are invaluable as the beginnings of a library, and of no value to the owners. Lectures have been added at Newport, by the worthy and enlightened secretary, Mr Abraham Clarke; and others have signified their intention of taking a similar part. In truth, it requires no professional lecturer to perform this important office. He who has learnt—even he who *is learning* chemistry, natural philosophy, or natural history himself, may render the greatest service in explaining those sciences to others who have not the same leisure, or the same command of teachers, books, and apparatus. In the Newport Society, all subscribers are members, and two-thirds of the Committee of Management are mechanics, according to the just principles.

Meanwhile the Central Establishment in London has flourished beyond the most sanguine expectations of its enlightened supporters. The foundation of the Theatre was laid about Christmas; and on the 8th of July it was completed and opened by the distinguished founder, Dr Birkbeck, supported by his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, the Marquis of Lansdown, Sir R. Wilson, Messrs Brougham, Wood, Hume, Martin, and other zealous friends of popular education; some of whom addressed the meeting, after the Doctor had closed his admirable lecture. The premises are spacious, and elegant, though perfectly simple,—consisting of a commodious house, in which there are large apartments for the library, apparatus, reading-rooms, and the secretary and other officers. The Theatre is a fine and lofty hall, where above a thousand students can easily be accommodated. The lecture of the learned President was a most interesting dissertation upon the advantages of intellectual pursuits, and contained many anecdotes of the shameful ignorance which in former times pervaded all

ranks, even the highest in the state. It is to be wished that this discourse, or the substance of it, should be published, both in remembrance of the occasion upon which it was pronounced, and for its intrinsic usefulness. We have called Dr Birkbeck the founder of this building; and well we may, for he advanced the money (several thousand pounds) which purchased the house and erected the Theatre. Other magnificent donations (especially Sir Francis Burdett's of a thousand pounds, and his able, accomplished, and excellent colleague, Mr Hobhouse, of a hundred) have been duly appreciated by the country. It is, however, only just to the working mechanics themselves to state, what we have good reason to know, that had no such helps been at hand, they were firmly resolved to raise the needful sums among their own body; and from their numbers and respectability, there can be no doubt that, in a few months, they would have accomplished this favourite object.

Statements of a most cheering nature were at the same time communicated to the meeting, evincing the happy effects produced throughout the country by the example of the metropolis. Bath, which, from the composition of its population, might not have been expected to join so early as many other places, in this noble struggle for liberating the people from 'the thraldom of ignorance,' as Milton calls it, had established a Mechanic's Institution, under the happiest auspices. Liverpool had added lectures to her excellent Mechanic's Library and reading-rooms. A beginning had been made at Birmingham (where undoubtedly an earlier attention to so congenial a plan might have been expected), promising the best results, in that wonderful resort of skilful and industrious workmen. Leeds too, under the influence of two most able and worthy men, though of different sects in church as well as state affairs, Messrs Marshall * and Galt, had founded an extensive and thriving institution. And it was further reported, that almost daily accounts arrived of similar efforts in the same great cause being attended with merited success. These articles of what may truly be termed philosophical intelligence, diffused the most lively satisfaction through that most numerous and respectable meeting; and we devoutly hope, that before another anniversary shall be holden of the Parent Institution, her offspring will have increased as the sands of the sea. † To promote this most desirable end, it has been often announced by the promoters of the institutions already founded, and especially

* Mr Marshall has published an admirable summary of Political Philosophy for Artisans, in a cheap and compendious form.

by those of the London Institution, that they will most willingly lend every assistance in their power, giving whatever information may be required as to the steps best to be taken, and the difficulties which, in distant places, may obstruct such designs. The publishers of this work will convey any applications upon the subject, either to the Directors of the London or the Glasgow Mechanic's Institutions, or to those of the Edinburgh School of Arts.

We would fain hope, that while we are indulging in the contemplation of such pleasing scenes, the *Misophotists* are by degrees learning to bear their disappointment with an equal mind. We would willingly comfort them as far as in us lies; and for this purpose, the best thing we can do is to relieve them from all doubt and suspense, by telling them that which will compel them at once to prepare for the worst. They cannot put out the light, do all they will. This much is quite certain. We shall conclude, therefore, by adding a word of comfort, from one whose High Church prejudices and Tory principles seemed calculated to bias his mind towards their alarms; but who yet was in no sense of the word a *Scotophilist*. The ordinary objection had been made in Dr Johnson's presence, to 'a general diffusion of knowledge,'—that 'it would make the 'vulgar rise above their sphere.' But he answered:—'Sir, 'while knowledge is a distinction, those who are possessed 'of it will naturally rise above those who are not. Merely to read and write was a distinction at first; but we see 'when reading and writing have become general, the common 'people keep their stations. And so, *were higher attainments to 'become general*, the effect would be the same.' (*Boswell's Life*, III. 36.)

† The name of these great establishments adopted in England, is *Mechanic's Institutions*, in preference to *Schools of Arts*. The reason given is, that the latter term expresses a limitation, quite at variance with the fundamental principle of our Southern neighbours, that mere *science*—the mere pleasures of speculation, are fit mental food for the whole people.

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